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HORIZON

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COMMENT

A SUBSCRIBER writes: 'You vituperated the English countryside for five pages in a recent Comment; perhaps you can suggest somewhere I can go for my summer holiday—I should like the illusion of the Mediterranean or the Alps'.

The illusion of the Mediterranean is almost impossible to achieve in this country, as nothing can bring its humidity into focus with the dryness of the South. There are exotic corners in England but no Mediterranean ones. The coast between Abbotsbury and Weymouth, with the Fleet and the Chesil Bank, is not unlike the Camargue and there are two fine loquats in the 'tropical' gardens at Abbotsbury. The only date-palm in England, apart from those in the gardens of Tresco Abbey. (Scilly) is underneath the cliff on the front at Torquay and this cliff garden together with the harbour and the limestone caves and islands which begin at the Imperial Hotel constitute the most Mediterranean ensemble to be found here. Another is the cove, beach, house and garden, with its pines and eucalypti, at Blackpool, beyond Dartmouth, which to my mind form the most beautiful scene on the southern coast, and Bolt Head with the Mediterranean plants in the Salcombe gardens where the cliff path starts, runs it very close. Newlyn, Mousehole, St. Mawes, St. Ives, all have a certain Mediterranean fishing port atmosphere, but in all these places the air is too enervating.

There are two Alpine regions in Britain. The Lake-District and the Cairngorms. The austere Cairngorms suggest Tirol and the Arlberg; while the Lake-District resembles the luxuriant Alpine regions of Savoy, and in spite of all the brouhaha is as beautiful as anywhere in the world: the lakes and the small but precipitous mountains are enhanced by a third element, the light, which compels us to look at everything through a dim romantic magnifying-glass, as in Chinese landscape painting. Here are the lush foothills of Aix and Annecy, the orchards by the waterside, the rough stone Alpine architecture and cottages that smell of cows. In this strangely withdrawn and unspoilt mountain world with its own climate and its own fertility, only civilians are to be seen, and it is probably more beautiful now, without charabancs and steamers, than it has been since Wordsworth composed his 'soft eye-music', or than it will ever be again.

Mind you send me a post card.

H. T. HOPKINSON

ROBERT LOVELACE, THE ROMANTIC CAD

FROM Diomede in *Troilus and Cressida* to Maupassant's *Bel Ami*, the literature of England and France is happily rich in cad. It is a rare, and perhaps unexpected, triumph that the supreme example should be the creation of one of our own writers, Robert Lovelace in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*—that immense, wonderful and complex novel which receives so much less than its due of admiration, partly because of its subject, the sexual war, personified in the encounter between two champions, Lovelace and Clarissa; and partly because of its curious medley of prosy sentiment with acute psychological understanding, of comfortable religiosity with an absorbed and almost prurient preoccupation in the details of sexual pursuit—Lovelace being professedly drawn as Lucifer, the all-powerful seducer, and Clarissa the embodiment of female chastity.

What is a cad? Why should the highest place be given to Lovelace? Why does Diomede rank only as a fourth-rate cad, and du Roy of *Bel Ami* no higher than the second class? Why must we exclude such a character as Meredith's *The Egoist* from all pretension to the title? Why is even the sparkling and feline hero of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, the Vicomte de Valmont—though he possesses the cad's chief attribute in a really admirable degree—inferior to his equally dashing, but more fell, English rival? How can we know a cad when we come across him in real life?

The quality that distinguishes the cad, that which gives him his right to the title, is his attitude to women. Nothing else. It is through this alone that he is, or is not, cad. It has nothing to do with birth or breeding; nothing essentially to do with manners. Those who confuse the cad with the bounder or the oaf commit a grave injustice, and distort the heritage of meaning.

The bounder's character shows everything to excess, even, it may be, generosity and courage. His attitude to women is simply any of the normal attitudes—also in excess. The oaf's

character need have *no* distinguishing features, and he is quite likely to be without an attitude to women at all. In the cad, his relations with women are the core and centre of his life. 'Love'—in its widest, shallowest sense—is the medium in which he operates; a gift for 'love' is the talent that was entrusted to him.

What then is the cad's attitude to women?

The cad is a man who looks on women as man's natural prey. All game laws are artificial. There is nothing in nature to say that we should kill partridges, and protect plovers. The cad regards women as game, the only game worth his trouble of pursuit. As with other sports, excellence consists in choosing the finest and most unapproachable examples for quarry, scorning the obvious and easy—unless challenged, when his pride compels him to pursue a woman just as he would draw his sword, or clench his fist, against a man. 'Many and many a pretty rogue had I spared', says Lovelace, 'whom I did *not* spare, had my power been acknowledged, and my mercy in time implored. But the *debellare superbos* should be my motto, were I to have a new one.'

Like other sportsmen, the cad accepts the risks his sport implies, which, in the time of Lovelace, were frequently those of life and death; they can be exceedingly severe today, when death is a less likely consequence.

Coupled with the lust for chase, is the trapper's or sporting man's other quality, the power to enter into his victim's mind and anticipate her likely moves. The more experienced he is, the better he knows his own limitations. He cannot interpret his quarry's mind under all circumstances, so he must prepare and produce those through which he can best operate. The pursuit becomes a long series of moves designed to exhaust the pursued, and finally drive her into one of the few well-defined situations from which there is no escape. Cut down her radius of action; exhaust her powers of resistance; pen her into a chosen corner; 'To such a place then—and where she cannot fly me—and *then* see how my will works, and what can be done by the *amorous see-saw*; now humble; now proud; now expecting, or demanding; now submitting, or acquiescing—till I have tired resistance'.

Because in the final conquest, the most accomplished pursuer enjoys—in Lovelace's view—but slight advantage over his manservant; attention is concentrated on the chase.

'Thou knowest nothing, Jack, of the delicacies of intrigue; nothing of the glory of outwitting the witty and the watchful; of the joys that fill the mind of the inventive or contriving genius, ruminating which to use of the different webs that offer to him for the entanglement of a haughty charmer . . .'

This is cardinal. The cad is not simply an over-greedy and promiscuous lover. He is not a 'lover' of women at all. His attitude towards them is quite different. He does not want, at least his final aim is not, to make love to them. His final aim is almost the opposite. It is to destroy them. Valmont, in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, would have been grateful for the opportunity of ruining a woman without the trouble of sleeping with her, if he could have found it.

This destruction, which is the cad's aim, may be social—the ruin of a 'reputation'. It may be, as in the case of Lovelace and Clarissa, physical extermination. More often it is a mental and moral destruction. But unless this fact of his aim is understood, the word 'cad' dwindles to a clubman's term of abuse for someone more successful at the same game than he is. Indeed this is precisely how the word is generally degraded.

The ordinary lover looks to his ordinary consummation. The cad looks beyond. His whole effort is bent on reaching the stage when she wants him, and he is no longer interested in her. His consummation is found when she entreats him to come and see her—and he casually replies that he's afraid he's busy all next week, but will see what he can manage later on. His paradise is to reduce a woman to that lowest state of all, when, for the sake of a smile or a kind word (or out of envy for the happy ones of her own sex) she will exert herself to help on his intrigues with other women.

If the cad makes love to a woman, and she does not pursue him afterwards, he reckons it a defeat. The attitude cannot better be summed up than in a single sentence from *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* out of a letter from Valmont to the Marquise de Merteuil, in which he writes: 'But I am talking already of the breaking-off, while you do not yet know the means by which I have acquired my rights.'¹ The supreme triumph, the way he has ended the affair, comes naturally into his mind and to his pen before the fact that there has been a love-affair at all.

¹ Quotations are from the *Nonesuch* Edition; translation by Edward Dowson.

It is necessary to realize that the cad can be perfectly correct, shows sometimes even an excess of strictness, in his behaviour in the other relationships of life. He can be an excellent master, an honourable employer, manager or servant; punctual in his engagements; a loyal and even generous friend to men. It is quite likely that he does not drink or smoke.

It is not even necessary for the cad to be a blasphemer or an atheist. 'In the midst of my wild vagaries', Lovelace tells Clarissa, 'I have ever preserved a reverence for religion and for religious men. . . . On this very account I have been called by good men of the clergy, who nevertheless would have it that I was a *practical rake, the decent rake . . .*'

This should also be the moment to clear out of our way another false but widespread notion, that the cad uses women to get on in life. Du Roy, the hero of *Bel Ami*, makes love to or abandons women at the shrewd dictates of a commonplace ambition. Tom Jones is led into accepting money to make love. To the cad such action is unthinkable, or at least a gross betrayal. It is opposed to all his governing principles. 'Libertines', says Lovelace with great penetration, 'are nicer, if *at all* nice, than other men'—but ambition is more likely to point out the old and ugly. And as for money, 'my predominant passion' he declares, in a coarse and curiously modern phrase, 'is *girl*, not *gold*; nor value I *this*, but it helps me to *that*, and gives me independence'.

It is the cad's relation to Society, rather than any necessarily unpleasant or despicable qualities in himself, that forces him into his position of unique detestation. And it is because a man's attitude to women is basic to his whole life and character that the cad's quandary is so painful, and his ruin beyond doubt; for it is the nature of his case to be involved in an exhausting and unequal struggle, not only against Society in general, and the whole creation of woman in especial, but also against a large part of his own self. In his own breast a savage war is continually being fought out, partly against weakness—the tendency to relax, the growing desire to 'settle down'—but more against those very virtues which, except in matters of love, he has trained himself to show.

Observe how critical is his position. He must, to remain true to his own principles, stamp down and crush inside himself every inclination to tenderness, generosity and pity in his dealings

with women. But then he must either, like Lovelace, foster or at least permit some of these feelings to flourish in the other relationships of life—in which case he becomes a battle-ground of conflicting impulses—or else he must show himself equally savage and remorseless in every contact with the world, and so not only cut himself off, finally, from every humane enjoyment, but also deprive himself of the possibility of continuing his career.

For, to explore his dilemma to the end, the cad is dependent upon keeping the goodwill of his fellow-men, while at the same time he is continually injuring their dearest interests and offending their deepest pride. He must have the goodwill of men, because he must circulate freely in society. His task continually grows in difficulty, because, the more his experience increases, the higher only will he care to fly—and yet the more his reputation has tarnished. He cannot keep secret his behaviour. He does not even want to, for it is often, though not necessarily, the exposure and betrayal of his victims that constitutes his achievement. Dependent on the sex with which he is at war, there is no recreation for him in society, no comfort in love, no peace in the privacy of his own spirit.

What can sustain a man in a race so wearing and exacting, over a course that continually gets stiffer as his own powers are failing? Only one thing; a demoniac pride. It is the same pride which leads men in all fields of life to pit themselves against the odds, to back their own abilities against the impossible; to drive through the hopeless undertaking; to continue their chosen course of action, because they chose it, knowing it will one day end in ruin, and counting each day the ruin is put off a triumph. It is the same pride which makes men come back again and again to the attempt on a mountain peak, or to sail single-handed round the world.

Sensuality has no more to do with the cad's pursuit of women than a love of exercise has to do with the attack on Everest. Each was perhaps the original impulse. Both may still be present. But either, of itself, would have wearied long ago, and as driving-forces for the great attempts they can be left out of account.

'Thou, too,' writes Belford, Lovelace's friend, 'a man born for intrigue, full of invention, intrepid, remorseless, able patiently to watch thy opportunity, not hurried as most men by gusts of violent passion . . . No; there cannot, I answer, be such another

man, person, mind, fortune, and thy character, as above given, taken in. If thou imaginest there could, such is thy pride that thou wouldst think the worse of thyself.'

The life and the chosen activity of the cad is a game of breaking characters, or, to use a conventional phrase, of breaking hearts; breaking hearts and subduing spirits. His purpose is the dissolution of mental and moral resistance to himself, the exaltation of his own pride by the abasement of another's. Pride is the oxygen on which he climbs. His only real defeat is humiliation.

Both de Valmont and Lovelace exhibit pride to an admirable degree—but their prides are different, and something can be learned from the comparison. De Valmont's is intellectual, a pride in his own cleverness, deriving from the mind, admitting therefore of other considerations. It gives him his remarkable quality, and it destroys him. That quality is nowhere better shown than in a sentence from his letter to the Marquise de Merteuil after his triumph over the Présidente de Tourvel—the only real triumph he enjoys: the rest of his conquests being what Lord Cecil once referred to as 'cheap triumphs over ill-armed savage tribes'. Here is the sentence. It is one which recalls the heights of cold experience. It has the chill of the peaks upon it. Let it serve as warning to any who suppose the life of the cad to be one of soft enjoyment among sensual and sentimental satisfactions:—

'For after all, if I have sometimes had, with this astounding woman, moments of weakness which resembled that pusillanimous passion [love], I have always known how to overcome them and return to my principles . . . Shall I be dominated at my age, like a schoolboy, by an unknown and involuntary sentiment. Nay: I must before all combat it and understand it.'

Such is de Valmont's pride. That of Lovelace is darker, fiercer, though less cruel, centring round his own masculinity. It is an inflamed pride of manhood, backed by an exaggerated vanity of birth, admitting no opposition, no obstacle, and not even any counterweight.

'A family (the Harlowes) beneath my own! No one in it worthy of an alliance with, but her! My own estate not contemptible! Living within the bounds of it to avoid dependence upon *their* betters, and obliged to no man living! My expectations still so much *more* considerable! My person, my talents—

not to be despised, surely—yet rejected by them with scorn. Obligated to carry on an underhand address to their daughter, when two of the most considerable families in the Kingdom have made overtures which I have declined, partly for her sake, and partly because I will never marry, if she be not the person. To be forced to *steal* her away, not only from *them*, but from herself! And must I be brought to implore forgiveness and reconciliation from the Harlowes? Beg to be acknowledged as the son of a gloomy tyrant whose only boast is his riches? . . . Forbid it the blood of the Lovelaces, that your last, and let me say, not the *meanest* of your stock, should thus creep, thus fawn, thus lick the dust, for a WIFE!—'

Between the ferocious male pride of Lovelace and the intellectual self-conceit of Valmont there is a great gulf fixed. How great two details show.

First, de Valmont reports the whole story of his triumphs as they proceed, to a woman. Imagine the dark heart of Lovelace taking a woman as confidant in its intrigues! De Valmont, however, does this for two reasons:—

He values her advice on how to prosecute his intrigue; that is he is basically unsure of his own powers; and he is anxious to magnify himself in her eyes by successes obtained elsewhere. Both reasons are utterly below a pride which merits the title of Satanic.

Second, and more damning, de Valmont, in the midst of his intrigues, admits to a concern for his own health. 'I have adopted a tone with her (he writes of Cécile Volanges) which I could not keep up long without injuring my health.' And again, 'Perhaps, I am abandoning myself overmuch to this, since I am compromising by it both my time and my health'. To Lovelace, the idea that any love affair, or any series of love-affairs, could impose a strain upon his constitution would have been utterly inadmissible, and he would have cut off his right hand sooner than put such words on paper to a woman.

It is this difference in the prides of de Valmont and Lovelace that explains their different attitudes towards their fellow-men. De Valmont delights to inflict humiliating injuries on everyone with whom he comes in contact, thus betraying that his treatment of women is not the cad's overpowering obsession, but the mark of a general treachery of mind. He is the nettle that stings all alike.

Lovelace, by contrast, is a friend to his friends. His companions feel genuine warmth and admiration for him. They are lost without his company. In their own adventures, his sword and purse are at their service, just as he employs his friends in his own desperate stratagems. There is a rough but genuine sense of honour amongst them; only it is limited to their own sex.

Manhood, as such, de Valmont holds, is nothing. The merest clod has manhood. Only in superior intelligence and breeding can distinction lie. But Lovelace recognizes a dignity of manhood in itself, and he feels in some relation with other men because of it. He curses his servant for a dog, but it is a dog of his own breed, and he speaks of no man with the easy contempt he reserves for the 'pretty rogues'.

For cold-heartedness in their dealings with women—that is, in swordsmanship, in mastery of the cad's weapon—neither Lovelace nor de Valmont can claim the advantage, but Lovelace exhibits a far greater persistence and whole-mindedness, an enviable power of absorption in the pursuit of his desire; while de Valmont reveals, what Lovelace would have despised, a refinement of moral debauchery after his own chief purposes have been obtained—as when he teaches Cécile a verbal catechism of indecency with which she may shock and horrify her future husband on their wedding-night. His is the cruelty of the cat; Lovelace's the savagery of the tiger.

One last comparison, and de Valmont must pass, defeated, from the lists. It concerns their respective powers of feeling. I have said that heartlessness is the cad's essential quality; so it is, to act with heartlessness. But in proportion as a man is heartless, he is less than man. Such is de Valmont's case. He is visibly lacking in moral sense or power of feeling, a debauched trifler, with the nasty depravity of a youth who has lived all his life in Courts, incapable of any real distinction between right and wrong. Judging a course of action only by the satisfaction he can get from it, his profoundest feeling is delight in his own cunning.

It is Lovelace's immense achievement to know all the human feelings in some strength; he is continually in danger of being seduced into tenderness and humanity; he frequently pauses in amazement, even in genuine awe, at the integrity and moral power of Clarissa—like the hunter who cannot bring himself to fetch down so fine a stag. But all his scruples, all his sentiments,

exercise no power whatever over his actions: 'I doubt not but I shall meet with difficulty. I must, therefore, make my first effort by surprise. There may possibly be some cruelty necessary.'

The respective moral statures of the two men are fearfully and wonderfully shown in the letters which they write upon similar occasions. In the first Valmont reports his triumph over the *Présidente*, in the second Lovelace records the violation of *Clarissa*. Of Valmont's letter there can be room for only a fraction:

'In the crowd of women with whom I have hitherto played the part and performed the functions of lover, I had never yet met one who had not at least as much desire to give herself as I had to persuade her to it; I was even in the habit of calling those women prudes who did no more than meet me half-way, in contrast to so many others whose provocative defence did but imperfectly conceal the first advances they had made.

'Here, on the contrary, I met with a preconceived unfavourable prejudice, which was subsequently strengthened by the advice and stories of a spiteful but clear-sighted woman, a natural and extreme timidity, fortified by an enlightened modesty; an attachment to virtue directed by religion, with already two years of victory to its account; finally, a vigorous course of conduct inspired by these different motives, which all had for their aim escape from my pursuit.

'It is not then, as in my other adventures, a mere capitulation, more or less advantageous, whereof it is easier to take advantage than to be proud: it is a complete victory, purchased at the cost of a hard campaign, and determined by cunning manœuvres. 'Tis not surprising, then, that this success, due to myself alone, should seem all the more precious to me; and the excess of pleasure which I experienced when I triumphed, and which I feel still, is no more than the sweet impression of the sentiment of glory.'

Those words—written to a woman who had guided him in his course of action, whose lover he had previously been, and to whom he was intending before long to return, slighting her therefore both as crime-partner and as mistress—prove indirectly the cause of Valmont's death. Contrast their vanity and wordy self-satisfaction with Lovelace's letter to his friend Jack Belford after his own crime has been committed;

it takes up two lines, but they are lines as pregnant as a trumpet sound:

‘And now, Belford, I can go no further. The affair is over.
Clarissa lives. And I am

Your humble servant,
R. Lovelace.’

★ ★ ★

One further problem must be cleared out of the way before we can do justice to our great English cad. Those who share my own respect for science will already have been asking, what is the biological purpose of the cad? We have been taught that Nature produces nothing at haphazard. There is reason for everything she does. A cad—from the frequency with which he is produced, and from the similarity of markings in specimens accumulated in many lands and over many centuries—must be considered a clearly-defined natural type. What is his purpose in the scheme of things?

It is the tendency of human beings, as we go through life, to try to accumulate about ourselves a tiny region of tranquillity. The stoic believes that this region can extend no further than a man’s own mind. But the natural man believes it can be enlarged to a wife and children, a house, a plot of ground, an animal or two: some tiny territory can be pieced together over which, in certain respects, we need not worry. We may worry about whether the inhabitants of this territory are fed, or whether they are well. But we need not worry about whether they are loyal.

It is the business of the cad to question, and, where he can, to overturn, these assumed established loyalties, to provoke mutiny in the crew, and to divide the household against itself.

No wonder, one may say, that he is hated. But a further question arises. Seeing that each man’s tiny state is assumed to be, not tyranny, but partnership, and seeing that all partners are, or should be, interested in maintaining the little state intact, how is it possible for mutiny to be provoked? The answer is in the word ‘assumed’. An ‘assumed’ loyalty unites the state, and little trouble, it may be, is taken on either side to keep that sentiment alive. Neglect, which need amount to no more than the decline from an eager into a conventional relationship, gives opportunity to the cad. He delights in other people’s ‘normal relationships’, for to him every relationship is special.

We cannot understand, we say, what our wife or our mistress 'can see in' so-and-so; but we are uneasily aware that her seeing it at all implies a criticism of ourselves. What we can never forgive the cad is that he sets too high a standard, or at least maintains it after our own need for it is over. He carries the attention appropriate to courtship on into the peaceful dispositions of normal life. His show of devotion, the charm of his ready concern, is introduced into territory we have accustomed to our own glum aloofness or pre-occupation. In so doing, the cad affords an uncomfortable reminder of all that we used to do and say and be. It is very easy for the cad. He won't be staying here long.

Once the cad has established his bridgehead, it is extremely difficult to eject him. The campaign then must run its course, and his opponent will require patience and immense control to gain the day. It is in the early stages of the relationship, at the moment when he makes his first advance, that the cad is vulnerable. It is vital for him then that the hollowness of his pretence should not be exposed. It is vital that he should convey to the woman the illusion of being, this time at last, genuinely affected. Then, for those first few days, or hours, or weeks, his coldheartedness must be hidden. If he can be shown up then, he can be routed.

Later, when the relationship has been established, when the woman has invested so much of herself in him that she is reluctant to admit she has been swindled, it is of little use, is often actually harmful, to expose him. For one cannot expose him without exposing her—and for that, in the long run, there is no forgiveness.

The best one can hope for now is to cover her retreat. And it is in this period of an established relationship, when the woman is involved and her protector's hands are tied, that the cad really comes into his own. Then, in the situation that is the most unhappy for the normal man, that of being loved more than he can love back, the cad is in his element. Being completely master of himself, he can draw off, or on; he can pursue a woman madly for a week—and disappear for a fortnight, only to return with a bland assumption that they have 'never been anything but friends'.

Unlike the lover, who is constantly amazed at his mistress's changes of temperature and feeling, the cad controls such changes, resolving before he meets her how he would like his mistress

to behave today. His whole skill lies in the pretence of feeling, varying the display of artificial warmth with revelation of the natural ice—thus producing those constant variations of temperature, centring always round himself, which constitute the ‘amorous see-saw’ of Robert Lovelace. He thus beats the woman at her own game of emotional relationships, and makes himself master of her on his own terms.

Once this has happened, a woman has only three courses, to break the relationship at any cost; to give way and become a slave; or to collect her forces and fight it out—in which case it will be necessary to murder her own feelings in order to avenge them.

Some notable triumphs in this form of emotional suicide have been seen in our day.

Lady R., who was having a love-affair with a well-known contemporary cad, Mr. P., made the mistake of going up to him in an affectionate manner, in a public place. He, plying the ‘amorous see-saw’, turned on her and abused her loudly, asking ‘if he was never to have any time to himself’. Lady R. swallowed fire, and continued her life with Mr. P., until one evening, in a moment of ecstasy, he so far forgot himself as to tell her that he ‘loved’ her. In a moment she was at the door, summoning her maid to pack everything she had. ‘That word “love”, she declared, ‘is the one thing I have been waiting for.’

Regarded biologically, the cad is the yeast that keeps the social dough in ferment. Regarded symbolically, he is the male protagonist in the sexual war. It is wrong, perhaps, to see the whole of life as a battle between the sexes. It is equally wrong to overlook or deny this aspect of our existence.

In the life of the cad the sexual war is summed up and personified, as the Siege of Troy sums up the ancient struggle for power between Greece and the countries of the Levant. Of all cads known to literature the finest and most remarkable specimen is Robert Lovelace; and he reached his own supreme heights—as Achilles reached his peak in fighting Hector—during his protracted struggle for the person of Clarissa Harlowe.

★ ★ ★

Up till now I have tried to give some kind of picture, or police description, of the cad, and to remove some of the commonest

misapprehensions as to his nature: in what follows I mean to prove the supremacy amongst cads of Robert Lovelace. To do this, it is necessary to take the evidence of his career.

The story of 'Clarissa' can be quickly told, though her fate requires more than 2,000 pages to work out. This is because—though her history is unfolded with an immense fertility of invention, and with the help of a rich variety of attendant characters—the story is basically simple. Clarissa is the daughter of a County family, whose great riches are too recent to have been assimilated. The accumulation of still more estates, with the hope of a peerage, are the family's two chief concerns. Clarissa, whose beauty, goodness, liveliness of mind and power of understanding are a by-word in the neighbourhood, is the beloved daughter of a stern father and a weak, devoted, mother; the 'daughter-niece' of her two elderly uncles and their wives: the jealously-regarded junior of a brother and a comparatively ugly sister. She is the family's second interest. Ambition is the first.

At eighteen, Clarissa has already refused several offers of marriage, with her family's approval. Robert Lovelace, a young man of 'a clear £2,000 a year' but of a bad reputation over women, a nephew of Lord M.—whose fortune and title he is expected to inherit—has heard of the fame of a daughter of the Harlowes. Mistakenly, he makes advances to the elder sister, Arabella. Realizing his error, he gets adroitly and without disgrace out of his entanglement with her, and pays court to Clarissa. Clarissa's brother, James, is an intolerant boar; having a grudge against Lovelace from their University days, he succeeds in picking a quarrel with him, is disarmed by him in a duel, and contemptuously granted his life for his sister's sake.

The slighted elder sister and her brother now make common cause to destroy Clarissa's position in the family. They represent Lovelace to their parents and uncles in the worst light, and succeed in having his offer for her hand coldly refused. They then declare that their sister is not to be trusted while such a man remains even potentially a suitor, and propose as Clarissa's husband the wealthy and detestable Solmes, whose estates are conveniently placed to constitute one vast property with those of the Harlowes.

Clarissa, with her mother's consent, is carrying on a semi-secret

correspondence with Lovelace, in order that the family may be aware, as they think, of what he is plotting, and that she may exercise some moderating influence over his hostility to her brother James. This intention, like every other device of the Harlowes, is turned back upon their own heads, through the superior cunning and capacity for intrigue of Lovelace. Indeed, from the start of the story until the moment when Clarissa leaves her parents' home, all those about her are acting, unknown to themselves, under the direction of Lovelace. They are, in his own words, 'Like so many underground moles; and still more blind than the moles are said to be'.

Lovelace uses a bribed servant, who is also high in the Harlowe's confidence, to plant discord, infuse threats, spread reports, and work up the family's hatred of himself and greed for riches—until they simply force Clarissa to fly from her own home rather than marry a husband she detests.

Lovelace, whose intrigues overlook nothing, has ensured that there shall be no friend to fly to but himself. He has taken care that evidence of his own good behaviour and supposedly reformed character shall reach her, in the shape of an inn-keeper's pretty daughter whose virtue he spares, and whom he aids in marrying her village sweetheart; and he has surpassed himself in protestations of his own honourable intentions towards Clarissa, undertaking to place her instantly in the care of distinguished ladies of his own family.

'But what shall I do with this Lovelace? I have just now...got a letter from him,' writes Clarissa. 'So uneasy is he for fear I should be prevailed on in Solmes's favour; so full of menaces, if I am; so resenting the usage I receive (for, how I cannot tell; but he has undoubtedly intelligence of all that is done in the family); such protestations of inviolable faith and honour; such vows of reformation; such pressing arguments to escape from this disgraceful confinement—O my Nancy, what shall I do with this Lovelace?'

With all his promises, Lovelace only gets her to leave home at the last minute by a trick, making use of the servant to pretend that her family have already missed her while she is talking to him, and that there will be bloodshed if she does not fly.

Lovelace has thus revealed himself from the outset as a cold-hearted plotter, of great adroitness, much taken with Clarissa's

beauty, but more by her known reputation. He is not 'in love' with her. He is in quest of his finest trophy yet, and, from the first, revenge on the Harlowes for the rejection of his formal advances constitutes an important motive, reinforcing his natural coldheartedness whenever he inclines to weaken into humanity.

'My REVENGE and my LOVE are uppermost by turns. If the latter succeed not, the gratifying of the former will be my only consolation: and by all that's good, they shall feel it; although for it I become an exile from my native country for ever.'

Inquiries made by the Harlowes have shown Lovelace to be an admirable landlord, a careful man of business, generous, of high education—an admitted match in all but morals. His striking good looks and lively manners point the contrast with the ill-favoured boorishness of Solmes.

Lovelace's intentions, expressed in letters to his friend Belford, are explicit.

'And what my motive, dost thou ask? No less than this, that my beloved shall find no protection out of my family; for, if I know *hers*, fly she must or have the man she hates. This, therefore, if I take my measures right, and my familiar fail me not, will secure her mine in spite of them all; in spite of her own inflexible heart: mine, without condition; without reformation promises; without the necessity of a siege of years, perhaps; and to be even then, after wearing the guise of a merit-doubting hypocrisy, at an uncertainty, upon a probation unapproved of. Then shall I have all the rascals and rascalses of the family come creeping to me: I prescribing to them; and bringing that sordidly-imperious brother to kneel at the footstool of my throne.'

His plan is to entice Clarissa to London. The house he will take for her—ostensibly furnished apartments let by a widow-lady in reduced circumstances—will be in fact a brothel kept by the woman Sinclair, of whom Lovelace and his friends have long been favoured clients. Here, he has no doubt, opportunities to seduce Clarissa will come his way. If his own charm work too slowly, a little intimidation may be safely used. He can either practise it himself, or serve as refuge from the savagery of Mrs. Sinclair and her trollops.

The house is a double one across a court-yard. No sound from the inner house can reach the street, as has often been noticed in the past. Once the seduction is over, he can either persuade

Clarissa to take the 'life of honour', as it is curiously called, with him; or he can, if he pleases, marry her. 'Marriage will be always in my power,' he declares, in answer to every objection from his own conscience, or his friend Jack Belford. He has no doubt that, if the trial should be scorching, the reward will be unique.

All turns out as Lovelace hopes. Clarissa, of her own accord, suggests London as the place of refuge. Of the houses mentioned to her, she picks out Mrs. Sinclair's. She is acute, and on her guard, but she does not know the full villainy of the man she deals with, and in plotting he consistently outranges her.

'What still more concerns me is, that every time I see this man I am still at a greater loss than before what to make of him. I watch every turn of his countenance: and I think I see very deep lines in it. He looks with more meaning, I verily think, than he used to look; yet not more serious; not less gay—I don't know how he looks—but with more confidence a great deal than formerly; and yet he never wanted that.

'But here is the thing: I behold him with *fear* now, as conscious of the power my indiscretion has given him over me.'

Clarissa's guiding hope is of reconciliation with her family; partly for this reason, and partly for friendship, she maintains a day-to-day correspondence with her sharp and witty friend, Miss Howe. (This is an admirable contrivance on Richardson's part. Lovelace's letters to Belford are enlivened by his own sardonic wit. In Clarissa frivolity is unseemly, and gaiety impossible; so the entertainment of the correspondence is provided by her friend.)

When a succession of stratagems fail to overthrow Clarissa's firmness, Lovelace gets possession of the correspondence, forging or suppressing letters between the two girls as it suits him. Meantime, having discovered by a pretended illness that Clarissa loves him, he fakes a fire to gain admittance to her room at night. Daunted by her virtue and determination, he retreats from her room on promise of a pardon. Next day Clarissa runs away to Hampstead.

Lovelace traces her. Employing all his skill as an actor, overwhelming himself with professions, apologies and arguments, he finally prevails on her to return to London in the company, as she supposes, of two honourable ladies of his family, arrived to add weight to his arguments and to guarantee his repentance. They

are in fact women of the town disguised. With their help, Clarissa is inveigled and threatened back into Mrs. Sinclair's brothel, drugged, and then raped by Lovelace.

'The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again, her eyebrows erect, like the bristles upon a hog's back, and, scowling over her shortened nose, more than half hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was distorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips, as if to bellows up wind and sputter into her horse nostrils; and her chin was curdled, and more than usually prominent with passion.

'With two *hoh-madams* she accosted the frightened fair one; who, terrified, caught hold of my sleeve . . .'

Guilty of a crime for which the legal punishment was death, Lovelace, already remorseful, refuses to abandon his dream of inducing Clarissa to live with him as mistress, and continues to practise his intrigues upon her. He concludes a string of arguments with himself upon his past treatment of her, and of how his whole behaviour—but above all the use of opiates—will look in the world's eyes, in words that should be embroidered upon every caddish pillow: 'If she escape a settled delirium when my plots unravel, I think that is all I ought to be concerned about.'

Acting upon this principle, when he finds that seduction has not broken Clarissa's will, Lovelace attempts intimidation, and in a truly magnificent scene seeks to frighten the woman he has already violated into a general compliance. He stages the occasion deliberately, flying into a false rage over Clarissa's attempted bribery of one of the house servants to help her run away.

Present in support of him is 'the damned Sinclair' and her whole evil pack. Clarissa, instead of hiding, comes from her room to stand before them all. By matchless determination and scorn she dominates the whole scene. She tells Lovelace that she despises him for his baseness; that he and the whole crew of women have brought themselves in reach of the law; that she will never be his in this world upon any terms. When they approach her she draws a knife, points it to her own breast and threatens to destroy herself before them all if they lay so much as a finger on her. . .

'Then, taking one of the lights, she turned from us; and away she went, unmolested. Not a soul was *able* to molest her.

'Mabel saw her, tremblingly, and in a hurry, take the key of her chamber door out of her pocket, and unlock it; and, as soon as she entered, heard her double lock, bar and bolt it.

‘By her taking out her key, when she came out of her chamber to us, she no doubt suspected my design: which was, to have carried her in my arms thither, if she made such force necessary, after I had intimidated her; and to have been her companion for that night.

‘She was to have had several bedchamber women to assist to undress her upon occasion: but, from the moment she entered the dining-room with so much intrepidity, it was absolutely impossible to think of prosecuting my villainous designs against her.’

Lovelace is now called to attend Lord M., believed to be dying in the country. He dare not refuse a man on whom so many of his hopes depend, and he leaves Clarissa in the keeping of the frightful Sinclair. From the country he pursues her with letters, making desperate offers of marriage in which even now, however, he is not fully sincere.

For the second time Clarissa escapes. The Sinclair crew, learning her whereabouts, have her arrested for ‘non-payment of lodgings’ while with them. For several days and nights she is held in a filthy garret, enduring patiently but refusing food, before she is rescued by Belford, Lovelace’s friend, who has been converted by what he has seen of Clarissa and her bearing under her distresses.

Her health is now finally broken. Apart from her physical and mental sufferings, she is spiritually haunted—by her father’s curse, pronounced against her when she left her home, that ‘she may meet her punishment, both *here* and *hereafter*, by means of the very wretch in whom she has chosen to place her wicked confidence.’ Though she is in friendly lodgings, visited by a doctor and an apothecary and watched over by Belford, she begins to prepare for death. In detail this part of the book is often mawkish and fatiguing, but its whole progress is triumphant.

Right up to the hour of Clarissa’s death, Lovelace, obsessed by the thought of Clarissa and his own vile outrage, is desperately attempting to induce her to marriage—having it still somewhere in his mind that he will betray her again at the last minute, and induce her to live as his mistress. Lovelace’s family and Clarissa’s friends urge her to patch things up for the sake of propriety.

Clarissa, though just nineteen, is beyond such considerations. She coolly prefers to die. In so doing she achieves a double

victory: she 'vindicates female purity', as it appeared to contemporary readers: she shows her own nature to be stronger than her misfortunes, as it appears to us. Secondly, she proves the superiority of the new middle-class ideals of domestic virtue to the assaults of the wicked nobleman with his Restoration swagger and corruption. She wins—even when in the physical contest she has been defeated; and she has fought the battle of a class, as well as of a sex.

After Clarissa's death, Lovelace goes abroad, where he is met and challenged by Colonel Morden, her guardian, who runs him through.

'You have well revenged the dear creature,' declares Lovelace, calling the bystanders to witness that the duel had been provoked by him, and is not the Colonel's responsibility. Towards men his conduct had always been correct.

★ ★ ★

Of *Clarissa* as a novel there are two main criticisms. First, that it is long-winded and boring. So, in many places, it is. But the effect on the reader who can attune his mind to the book's pace is of the frightful slowing-down of a river as it nears a waterfall. The surface becomes glassy. The leaves and sticks appear to dawdle. A gnat settles, and lifts off into the air again. Nothing is happening. Nothing is going to happen. It seems we shall be drifting here for ever. But underneath, the current is flowing with a dreadful swiftness. The leaves and sticks that have idled so long now suddenly acquire a purpose. The next gnat that touches water fails to rise—and suddenly one sees the silky surface bend away, bend forward, break into a cataract.

On its contemporaries the book's effect was so great as to seem ludicrous. As the volumes appeared, Richardson was besieged with entreaties to make the book end happily. Female virtue, it was stated, would become a mockery if even a *Clarissa* should meet disaster; and 'a Dutch divine' is said to have told Stinstra that if *Clarissa* had formed one of the canonical books of the Bible, it would have furnished proof positive of Divine inspiration.

Secondly, there are objections to *Clarissa* founded upon an exaggerated common-sense. Those who find the beautiful creature's slow destruction more than they can bear, keep rising, like rustics at the play, and giving her good advice. They tell her

to leave the wicked man; to run out into the street; to go back home on any terms; to seize one of Lovelace's calculated half-proposals, and insist upon his marrying her outright. One critic has ingeniously suggested that she should walk right out of the book and go round the corner to the Bow Street Court, where that notable magistrate and rival author, Henry Fielding, will put things right for Richardson's ill-used heroine.

Third, and less important, are those who pick on the ludicrous side of *Clarissa* to ignore, not only its power and depth, its almost frightening penetration, but its wit and humour. This they pass over to detect the humour that is unconscious. We can give them their point. There is much in *Clarissa* of that exaggerated sensibility which the passage of time has rendered funny. A single example will serve, the observation of *Clarissa*'s old nurse, Mrs. Norton, that to have her eyes closed in death for her by *Clarissa* was a 'pleasure' she had 'often promised herself'.

Such small points we can enjoy, without their in any way detracting from the grandeur of the book. All the main objections fail to take in the point of the story, and the real tragedy of *Clarissa*. Throughout her captivity, until the night of his base attempt under pretext of saving her from fire, *Clarissa* cannot leave Lovelace. She cannot leave him for only one reason. She does not want to. She is in love with him, with the full force of her nature—though with many misgivings in her mind. She, with her excessive reserve, with her superabundance of good works and her over-orderliness of life, with her premature absorption in eternity—needs precisely those qualities which she rightly apprehends in Lovelace.

Lovelace is easy, debonair, assured; deeply masculine, as she is truly feminine; with, it seems, only those moderate vices that come from good health and a spoiled childhood—and whose cure will provide occupation for her own talents, which she will know so well how to exercise with tact. 'And twenty things of this sort I even *preached* to him; taking care, however, not to be tedious, nor to let my expanded heart give him a contracted or impatient brow. And, indeed, he took visible pleasure in what I said, and even hung upon the subject, when I, to try him once or twice, seemed ready to drop it; and proceeded to give me a most agreeable instance that he could at times think both deeply and seriously. . . .'

C

Above all, the two natures are united in being passionate and proud. Clarissa's self-control and Lovelace's studied rakishness are the surfaces of natures which have deeps in common.

'That she loves thee,' Belford writes to Lovelace, 'wicked as thou art, and cruel as a panther, there is no reason to doubt. Yet what a command has she over herself, that such a penetrating self-flatterer as thyself art sometimes ready to doubt it!'

Lovelace himself declares of her: 'But this sweet creature is able to make a man forego every purpose of his heart that is not favourable to her. And I verily think I should be inclined to spare her all further trial (and yet what trial has she had?) were it not for the contention that her vigilance has set on foot, *which* shall overcome the *other*.'

Again, in a single extract, the pride of both is manifest.

'But she will not trust me,' cries Lovelace. 'She will not confide in my honour. Doubt, in this case, is defiance. She loves me not well enough to forgive me generously. *She is so greatly above me!* How can I forgive her for a merit so mortifying to my pride! She *thinks*, she *knows*, she has *told* me, that she is above me. These words are still in my ears. "Begone, Lovelace! My soul is above thee, man! Thou hast a proud heart to contend with! My soul is above thee, man!"'

It is from the strength of the two chief characters that the power of the book derives. It is a slow-motion wrestling-match of minds and natures, all-in, with no holds barred, and only those who care for such strong spectacles should undertake it.

The more uncommon, the more brilliantly drawn character of the two is the one over which Richardson took less trouble—the wicked nobleman, Lovelace; the great romantic cad; a character so real and so oppressive that critics, unable to endure his presence, dispute the evidence of their eyes by declaring him 'impossible'—and I have even heard it suggested in discussion that, though he might conceivably have existed in the eighteenth century, neither Lovelace nor any one like him can be imagined as existing today.

How much we English gain in the force of our emotions from the crust of religion and respectability beneath which we imprison our feelings! Even Lovelace, rake by profession, is at pains to make it clear that he believes in God, and to smooth the most indefensible of his expedients with a gloss of conventional

excuse. It is clear that Richardson himself would have regarded an atheist as inadmissible between the covers of a book—even if he only came there in order to be damned. But, by a master-stroke of ingenuity, Richardson uses this necessity of brushing a moral gloss over his villain, to give the book one of its outstanding and least-noticed qualities, and its hero one of his chief interests for the reader—wit.

In his correspondence with Belford, Lovelace employs a sparkling casuistry, a mastery of heartless logic which is a ceaseless delight—even though with every phrase it brings nearer Clarissa's doom, which comes soon to haunt the book.

Utterly logical is the course the conflict takes. Clarissa comes to Lovelace because she is attracted by him. Once in his presence, the struggle is now in her own breast—between her wish to remain beside him, translated into a hope of marrying and reforming him, and her growing conviction that his nature will prove the stronger of the two. Constantly she comforts herself with the assurance that Lovelace cannot really *mean* to do her harm.

Lovelace, on his side, has a conflict. He hopes to seduce her with her own consent, against no more than the show of protest which is becoming, and for which he will make every allowance, and then, 'Once subdued, and always subdued'. But he, on his side, has inklings that for the first time he may have come up against a creature with whom the rake's rules and catchwords will not hold.

To gain his end, Lovelace is forced to reveal what that end is. He enters her room by night. Clarissa is then, by her own principles, compelled to fly him. Lovelace recognizes that they have fought down to the last throw. He has only one resource left, the most primitive of all—his superior physical strength. He uses it, comforting himself that he can always make amends.

It is here that Richardson's truly immense penetration, and the integrity of his artistic feeling, takes charge. After the rape, Clarissa rejects Lovelace. She has seen the true nature of his soul, and her own turns away, disgusted, from it. But beneath all the talk of salvation and eternity, the reason Clarissa rejects him is that he has degraded her in her own sight as a woman.

He has refused to treat her woman's nature and her woman's personality with respect. In so doing, he has shown that he fails

to value her at her true worth, and has thrown away the treasure which he might have had. Clarissa all along was really his. But she was not his slave. She would be his on terms. Her terms were honourable marriage, and the reformation of his life. If Lovelace had married Clarissa, there is not the least doubt that he would have had a passionate, loving, enchanting and intelligent wife.

He failed to understand the offer; and, so far as he did perceive it, thought the price too high. He was unable to distinguish Clarissa from the whores with whom he had too long associated. He imagined he could take her first, and dictate the terms at leisure, as a conqueror. He would break her heart, and give her some part of his attention as reward. Again and again, Clarissa makes it clear that he, of all men, could have had her. She understood him. In spite of his grave defects, she was willing to link her lot with his.

All those laborious traps and plots to 'test' her, to find out whether she was worthy of him—how foolish, as well as despicable, they appear to Clarissa once she has seen him clearly. In the breach with her family she has already suffered far more on his behalf than he, with all the machinery of intrigue, can invent. His careful expedients serve only to reveal his own cruelty and, literally, to add insult to injury.

I believe myself that the rejection of Lovelace is not really final, that he could still—if he had brought himself to abandon his double aims and to treat sincerely with her—have recovered his position and secured her hand in marriage, right up to a particular moment well over half-way through the book. The rape is over. Clarissa has been driven almost out of her mind, but recovers sufficiently to see Lovelace at his insistence. He approaches her with his riddling arguments, persuasions, flatteries.

'... Hear me out, I beseech you, madam'; for she was going to speak with an aspect unapacifiedly angry: 'The God, whom you serve, requires but repentance and amendment: imitate *Him*, my dearest love, and bless me with the *means* of reforming a course of life that begins to be hateful to me. *That was once* your favourite point. Resume it, dearest creature: in charity to a good soul, as well as a body, which once, as I flattered myself, was *more* than indifferent to you, resume it. And let tomorrow's sun witness to our espousals.'

'I cannot judge thee,' said she; 'but the God to whom thou so boldly referrest can; and assure thyself *He* will. But, if compunction has *really* taken hold of thee; if *indeed* thou art touched for thy ungrateful baseness, and meanest anything by pleading the holy example thou recommendest to my imitation; in this thy pretended repentant moment, let me sift thee thoroughly; and by thy answer I shall judge of the sincerity of thy pretended declarations.'

Then was the last moment at which Lovelace could have saved himself and her. If, at that moment, he had exposed his own trickery for the purpose of abandoning it, he could have won her forgiveness and regained her love.

Instead, caught in his own snares, and ashamed before the women of the house to give up those plots in which they have had a share, he continues to try and lie his way out. From that moment his doom and hers are certain. Lovelace ends his account of this interview with the foreboding words:

'She is the only *woman* in the world who could have shocked and disturbed me as she has done . . . And I think I have the worst of it by much: since very little has been my joy; very much my trouble; and *her* punishment, as she calls it, is *over*: but when *mine* will, or what it *may be*; who can tell?'

That is the last word about Lovelace. His whole life was centred upon women. His hopes of happiness were concerned with women. He had enough discernment to choose out the 'finest of her sex'. He had not enough to see where his own happiness with her might have lain. Accustomed to destroying, he could, when his chance came, still only destroy.

For his eye in the choice of quarry; for the skill he displayed in its pursuit; for his willingness to pay for his enterprise with his life—but above all for the extreme clear-sightedness with which he followed his own progress in the chase, Lovelace must be acclaimed the Great Romantic Cad.

Heaping lie upon lie to women, he never for an instant deceives himself.

'I am confoundedly out of conceit with myself', he writes, following one of his failures to come to terms with Clarissa after the violation. 'If I give up my contrivances, my joy in stratagem, and plot, and invention, I shall be but a common man: such another dull heavy creature as thyself. Yet what does even my success in my

machinations bring me, but disgrace, repentance, regret. But I am overmatched, egregiously overmatched, by this woman. What to do with her, or without her, I know not.'

And that is, of course, a danger the cad runs: he may destroy something which he afterwards wants back.

MARY WYKEHAM

TRAINING-COLLEGE 'ART'

THE Chinese used to forbid children to draw, as their images might undermine parental authority. This frame of mind has its counterpart in the rules of totalitarian or academic art; as a Frenchman once said, 'There is art, and official art'. An exactly opposite attitude is needed in those who teach art to children. How can it best be developed among people whose lives are influenced, even controlled, by official organisations?

Art cannot be taught. It can be given opportunity and encouragement to grow. It is a partly irrational activity, and depends on a delicate balance of contraries, which overstability destroys. Any formula is anti-instinct, an attempt to make art inoffensive.

Constable said for him painting was the same thing as feeling. Mr. Herbert Read has recently pointed out that 'art is the basis of the technique of education', when education is understood as dealing with feelings and emotions rather than merely stuffing the head with so-called knowledge. In the important social experiment of the Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham, it was proved how rapidly children develop mentally and morally through physical activity. As shown in the book just published¹ an unruly mob of children developed into remarkably self-reliant responsible beings when offered a variety of activities suitable to their age.

Art combines physical and mental activity, and has a much wider purpose in education than producing drawings and paintings. It is such an essential element of human nature that children need the means for it much as for any other form of development. They need the right atmosphere of belief in their creations, encouragement, simple materials, absence of criticism or marks. Only if they are worried need advice be given; help in feeling for structure, remembering or re-imagining. The one thing which can and should be taught is care of materials. The rest can be left to the children and the results are often amazing.

It is not art *for* the people that is wanted, but an art *of* the people. Art for the people is not produced by inner necessity, but stimulated by an exterior will, which uses the artist as a tool. Art of the people, of which child-art is in England

¹ Pearse and Crocker, *The Peckham Experiment*. Allen & Unwin.

almost the only example, is alive, born of intuition and experience. Of course many people are afraid of it. It is a revolt against mechanization and destruction, something stronger than habits of security-seeking and comfort, which is capable of arousing passions. The child does naturally what the adult attempts to do consciously; he brings to his problem all his awareness, rational and irrational, and makes a synthesis of his experience. In trying to prove that children's drawings are influenced by their environment, we collected drawings from various parts of England. What was proved instead was that neither physical environment nor social class shows itself in young children's drawings, except through adult influence. When children draw freely, it is an expression of themselves as part of their own world of imagination.

Everybody has the ability to paint or draw, but few the opportunity to develop it, if they want to. When education encourages this, not everyone will become an artist; but imagination and a sense of wonder will remain alive, and not be confined to painters and writers. More people will look on everything they do as an art, have a sense of colour and design to apply to their surroundings, and be able to appreciate pictures, and tell good ones from bad.

The difficulty is that teachers have too much to contend with at present. When forty in a class is the average number, the problem is not to teach, but to keep order. Most of the teacher's energy is spent negatively, in keeping the children in their desks, and stopping talking. She stands at the head of the class and carries on a question-and-answer process. 'Where are apples found?' . . . All the hands go up in a frantic salute, the only movement allowed. Others are bored, go to sleep, or pick their desks to pieces. So the 'strap' or birch comes out, or a class may be made to sit through a lesson with their hands above their heads.

All children like painting, their hands and minds are occupied, and even with a large class, 'discipline' (of this kind) is not necessary; but too many teachers are worn out with keeping order to be able to change their methods.

Most primary school buildings are inconvenient, ugly and squalid. Seventy thousand more teachers are to be trained rapidly to keep children in school for two more years. Under present conditions this will do more harm than good. Both teachers and pupils need to be educated more in the way Eric Gill said the artist should be, by 'living, thinking, and feeling'.

Although long-term policies as regards buildings and equipment are needed, there is much that can be done at once by a new outlook in the Training-Colleges and camps.

Recently I spent a short time teaching art in a women's Training College for elementary school teachers, considered one of the best in England, and these were my impressions.

It is situated in some of the most wonderful country in England, where the towns and houses seem to have pushed up out of the ground, they are so much a part of the landscape. But the building itself is graceless and gawky, and in no way matches the country. It seems to bellow at intruders, 'I am an institution; don't you mistake me for anything else.'

If Training Colleges were a vital part of local life, the buildings themselves would be more likely to look as if they belonged, to invite instead of repelling.

It is useless to arrive at a place so hideous that to think of concentration camps is the only consolation. Inside, the offensive coffee colour of the walls (a colour that absorbs light instead of reflecting it, and is associated with public halls and lavatories), was unadorned except by fire-hose and sand-bucket; the bare corridors resonant like empty houses, the walls and floors thin enough to let through a sneeze or rustle of paper, the bedroom doors without handles, but instead queer little latches difficult to hold, so the normal easy way to shut them is by slamming. At 7 a.m. a bell rings; soon after, another, then another. Bell-ringing and gong-banging continue through the day. In the evening, bedlam reigns, until official time-to-sleep at 10.30, as if to keep awake forcibly any who might fall asleep before the last bell. One wonders whether this system will make perfectly trained Pavlov dogs, reacting to noise and clock, or whether some may find it disconcerting to have to organize their own lives again. All this is reasonable from an entirely materialist point of view; but there is an unsatisfied feeling among the people who run these places that materialism alone is insufficient. It is no good to retreat from it, into outworn traditions or organized prayers; the age itself is materialist, and can only change by advancing through it, and by using imagination to transform it. A few material improvements (such as pictures on the walls, an occasional C.E.M.A. exhibition, or loan of an object from the local art gallery, cheap carpets on the floors, and seats in the corridors) would be more educational than imposed and hazy idealism.

These colleges have a chance to become a focus for the locality, to be a useful part of local life, while themselves drawing much more from it.¹ (It is not entirely the fault of the colleges themselves, but is due to the attitude of the local education boards, which, composed mainly of people who know little about education, act as a drag on new ideas.) A community of any size tends to become self-centred unless well-linked to the outside. At present, owing to timetables, it is practically impossible for students to listen to the radio news; one daily paper is taken by each hall, containing forty students. There are almost no other links with outside affairs, for which students gradually lose their taste. *The Teacher's World* is the one paper read by all, the limit of the world for a good many.

In addition, the timetable is so over-full that no free time at all is left; subjects are not absorbed, but learned superficially, ready for exams. Spontaneity and imagination soon die, and students sit passively in class, asking what they should do next . . . hardly a hopeful attitude for future teachers.

Art is not sleight-of-hand, but communicating a thing felt; and one feels if they were sometimes allowed to go on doing what they are interested in, ignoring bells, meals, and classes, they might at least learn how to make use of what they know.

At the end of term, a few students made wall-paintings in the corridors. This act of bringing colour out of the art-room and transforming a small piece of wall, did more to change the outlook of both students and staff than the whole term's art lectures.

There is first-rate art-teaching in many elementary schools in London. But in country schools, the weekly 'art' period usually still consists of drawing

¹ See *A Handbook of Education*, 'The Primary School', by C. Fletcher.

with hard pencils on small pieces of paper, or doing formal lettering with inadequate pens. Some students told me they had not used colour since they were eight; and in some schools, the colour, although there, is kept locked away and not used, as it is considered too messy. The right materials (powder-colour, large brushes and large paper), are not messy if used rightly; and after the initial outlay, cost no more, as a child will take two or three lessons to finish a large painting, while he will be bored with a small drawing before the lesson is over. The students (aged 17-20), who mostly came from this type of teaching, at first seemed to go back to age 6-10, and rapidly work up to nearer their own age-level. One never knew exactly where they would emerge.¹

It was the opinion of Mme. Montessori that there is an 'appetitive phase' for certain forms of development, which, if not offered to the child at the right stage, may be arrested or irretrievably lost.

It seems to be so with art: there are certain stages in which interest in colour, shape, pattern-drawing, follow each other. If these have been missed, they have to be consciously 'lived through' later, before a mature art is possible.

What will happen when all children do these things at the right age? Personally I think we shall have a happier and more balanced society, if not a new form of people's art.

This depends as much on the right teacher as on the right materials: one is no use without the other.

It would probably be better if Training-College art were divided into two sections: one for students who wish to develop their own skill; the other for those who only wish to develop a skill in art-teaching.

The first group would gain from contact with local art-schools, and from practical use of their art, linked with other subjects. The second group, who gain nothing from struggling half-heartedly with a subject in which they are not interested, would learn more through observation and practice of teaching methods. Many of the best art teachers in primary schools do not themselves draw or paint. Both groups should see plenty of examples of good work, to cultivate appreciation and criticism and set an ultimate high standard.

¹ A tentative attempt to define the stages of children's drawings:

2-5. Scribbles, mainly practising hand-control, using entirely personal symbols.

7-10. Still practising co-ordination and control, but subject is more important, and symbols begin to be adapted to look more like accepted ones. Large paper essential to allow child's own rhythm to be found, and use of as many strong colours as possible to develop colour-sense.

10-11. Balance of picture as a whole, and space-filling, are main interest. Things still drawn as felt, rather than as seen, and solution of problems very individual, i.e. a row of cups may express a cup being moved from dresser to table, or trees around a pond may be drawn radiating from the centre.

11-13. Some children continue to draw only as they feel and imagine, some begin to draw as they see. Hand-movements are controlled by picture-plane, and stress is on composition and balance rather than naturalism.

13-14. With some, naturalism increases and actual life-study begins. Effort is to see, and draw as seen. Therefore balance of the picture is often temporarily lost. Help in seeing, in finding structure and form, is useful.

14 plus. Balance and composition begin to become conscious, also planning and 'style'. Period of experiment. Interest in materials, and intellectual problems (formal composition, perspective, anatomy, colour theory). Help in keeping imagination lively is needed, by linking art with other activities; and plenty of good pictures should be seen.

When it is realized that not only art, but all education, is a matter of feeling and co-ordination, of the development of inherent possibilities rather than the acquisition of book-learning, it is obvious also that education is for and *through* living.

My impression was that the segregation of students at an age when they should be encouraged to become part of a wider, mixed and more mature society, has an effect on their outlook and development, which again vitally affects their teaching. The lack of opportunity for mixing naturally with people of the other sex and of other ages, means a loss of discrimination and of social balance. The refusal to allow political discussion and action (lecturers taking part in political activity have been threatened with dismissal) means the failure to cultivate a critical and reasoning sense of responsibility to the world as a whole. I was told that in one Training College for men, students are locked in their rooms at night, and out of them by day. This kind of imposed discipline springing from distrust keeps students at far below their own age-level.

After training, when students are on their own, either they will fling themselves into opportunity with all the unbalance of repression, or, which is worse, they will accept the pattern into which they have been stamped. All taboos on married teachers, and all rules demanding standards of behaviour in them which are not expected of other people, are in fact ways of limiting their responsiveness and development, which are bound to be reflected in their handling of children.

Senior students are already less gay and responsive than juniors, and congested with too much learning and too little application of it, they begin to resign themselves to the old educational ideas like out-of-date clothes.

Right education is education in the *use* of knowledge, for which all human beings have a natural appetite, and external discipline is the measure of the failure of education.

'The healthy child is continually exploring the world about it, with its senses, limbs, and brain. In acquiring one new co-ordination after another, it is continually gaining new powers, new skills, and knowledge. It would seem that each appetitive phase for new co-ordination appears in orderly sequence, and has a strength and duration characteristic of that particular child. . . . This study of the sequential emergence of functional co-ordination after birth is in our opinion of as great an interest and importance as is the study of the sequential development of the individual's features before birth.

'Herein lies the promise of a rational basis for a future science of education.'

The Peckham Experiment.

This view of education, with its wide implications, studied and applied in Training Colleges and schools, would produce not only better art-teaching, but people who understood both teaching and living as an art.

PAULE VÉZELAY

ON CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS

CHILDREN's drawings have frequently been exhibited, reproduced and discussed in recent years and during that time much—perhaps too much—has been written about them; some people have been ponderously persuaded that these drawings are works of art. Some have even come to appreciate the excellent qualities occasionally to be found in the pictures made by 'our little artists'.

In this country alone children probably produce many millions of drawings every year. Appearing as spontaneously as buds in spring, they blossom continuously every day throughout the four seasons; we see them in nurseries and we find them in playrooms and schoolrooms, as well as in gardens, back-yards and poor living-rooms. So great a number must contain some at least to which chance has been kind, and in which we find therefore, a happy arrangement of colours; others in which the contrasting forms, although invented at random and placed without forethought, do constitute a total which is not inharmonious.

Most children have enough imagination to create new worlds for themselves and to fill these worlds with imaginary objects and strange beings; we may remember our own childish games and the inventive capacity of our friends, which gushed forth as copiously as the stream of imagination which was for ever flowing from some mysterious source we also possessed. When this power of invention takes pictorial form we are invited to share the child's poetic vision; among these drawings we may find some which are both sensitive and bold, while others have beauty of line or colour or a pleasing contrast of form and movement. The entire self-confidence of the child seems at first glance to counter-balance, or even conceal, his lack of technical skill; the untrammelled joy evidently experienced in the making of the drawing transmits a lively feeling of pleasure to us.

Yet as we look at many of the drawings made by children, we may as well admit that we are forced to strive unflinchingly to hide our own shattering sense of failure; we are forced to realize

that our own imagination, less elastic than hitherto, fails to interpret the objects so fearlessly portrayed or insists upon gliding off like Venetian gondolas during Carnival—everyone bound on some illicit voyage. Baffled but non-committal before these children, we conceal as well we may a devastating sense of shame at our own slow-witted perceptions, and with the practised cunning of the fully grown in modern art galleries, we 'try to do better next time'.

Experience gradually teaches us that when we look at the highly coloured forms and bold lines on the paper held out to us, we must decide whether they are making a portrait of Granny looking at a book or of cook making a cake; we hesitate and dare not guess if the next drawing is of the gardener in the potting shed or Nanny sewing near the nursery window. When we see a glorious red square with a trembling line hanging from each corner, our wits may help us to realize that this may be the reincarnation of the nursery table beneath its red cloth, while the drawing of a green oval under a reckless use of cobalt blue is indeed the field where the children play beneath the summer sky.

Such drawings may remind us that all great artists have simplified what they have seen or imagined; the early Chinese Masters invented their amazing alphabet by this very process, thus generating the centuries of glorious art which followed their invention. Indeed, all through the history of art, from prehistoric cave drawings until today, we find the same process of simplification being used with enormously different results; while it would be untrue to say that only by elimination have works of great value been produced, we may be sure that this process of selection has been used always, everywhere. The artists have used their power of selection in the first place to extract the essentials, in the second place to preserve the chosen details from the embarrassing mass which confronted them, and many works have been rendered uninteresting by the reloading of uninteresting details on the essential forms first selected. When artists contemplate what is before their eyes or in their imagination they know they must fly around, above and beneath it—if not actually, at least mentally, for they can select those lines, colours and forms which are essential to their purpose, only when their knowledge is complete and intimate. All else must be sacrificed and discarded.

The child also makes his drawings simple, but for very different reasons; far from selecting the essentials from a mass of knowledge his drawings are simple because he has realized only what is most obvious. Children do not consciously decide what they consider necessary for their purpose. Among the massive volume of scrawls and scribbles which they produce, some have qualities generally seen only in the work of experienced artists, but it must be said that these qualities owe their existence more to artlessness than to art.

Many intelligent people have tried to define the word art, yet it is all too frequently used to describe the productions of the hairdressers, or the skill of sportsmen; it is applied to most admirable inventions which have no relationship to art, although both ingenious and valuable in their own way. We find, too, the title of artist is everywhere gratuitously claimed by an enormous and ever increasing number of people, who seem to hope that the hard north light of a studio will help them to discover the talent and knowledge entirely denied them elsewhere. These self-styled 'artists' bring the very title into disrespect, for few among them have ever studied seriously; they lack natural ability as well as modesty, and having long lost their last tatter of childish innocence, they have failed to preserve the qualities of simplicity and sincerity which are to be found in the drawings of almost every child. These humbugs remain in our midst, crudely camouflaged as artists, an immense army of saboteurs who believe they can escape all the irksome effort which even the chosen few do not attempt to evade.

It is well to remember that drawing and painting are sciences, sciences which have immutable laws of harmony and a technique which no amount of 'genius' or 'inspiration' finds ready to hand. Long years of study are necessary before an artist can hope to say, like an Old Master of China:

'Our spirit must make our hand its servitor;
Our hand must respond to each behest of our spirit.'

Art being a science unknown to children, it would appear a contradiction in terms to describe their drawings as works of art, and remembering this we should not expect them to contain qualities foreign to childhood, or judge them by mature standards. As long as children remain childish and their drawings are not

masqueraded as works of art, all is well; if their pictures have not the gusto of Rowlandson nor the charm of George Morland, at least they seduce us by a kind of charming gusto entirely their own.

Unfortunately as they grow older, these valuable qualities of sensibility and joyful colour seem to dwindle away at the very moment when we should hope to see them cherished, enriched and developed; but as soon as children begin 'to learn about art', dreadful inhibitions often settle upon their minds and their hands, and all the innocent gusto and self-confidence disappear, leaving their ignorance and lack of technique glaringly evident. The laws of perspective, of proportion and above all of harmony, are ignored because the child has little or no knowledge of them; ignorance does not prevent him from becoming aware of his inadequate knowledge and a disastrous disillusion concerning his own creations begins to overwhelm him.

It is often at this moment that grown-up opinions on art—for the most part deplorably ignorant and confused—appear out of the blue; they hover overhead like unidentified butterflies, flitting and fluttering hither and thither quite aimlessly. It is impossible to imagine why these grown-ups seem to expect a child to rush eagerly towards any art which they themselves happen to like; if he does not do so he is coaxed or dragged towards it, as his grandparents had been dragged over the cold shingle of England's rain-drenched shores—towards the sea, to cries of 'dip! and wet your head, dear'.

So the child is dragged towards works of art which he neither loves nor admires, and about the merits of which his grown-ups are hopelessly vague; it is not astonishing that doubt and perplexity about art are born in the child's mind and generally take root, and the irresistible desire to draw and paint finally falters until all his production ceases except under the stress of school time-tables. We are led to believe that the influence of Freud is in part responsible for freeing children from the old constraints, constraints which hitherto had been at the root of inhibitions that develop secretly, only to appear later in life, deep-rooted and labyrinthine; whether or not, the admirable desire for the free development of a child's every faculty is, perhaps, sometimes misdirected.

Freedom from meaningless restraint is excellent, but although discipline is a word much out of favour, our powers and talents

can never have much value without some degree of it. In spite of the many thrilling and terrible inventions that are part of our daily life, no one has yet discovered a labour-saving device for giving the brain knowledge, or a contrivance which can render the inexperienced hand both sure and flexible; so it would seem certain that no one can hope to produce that rare thing called art, without a tremendous concentration of his faculties of thought, feeling and experience over a long period—and even then? Are we now to cease all instruction for fear of being dogmatic? Such a question must not be answered lightly, but it would seem useless, nevertheless, to send children to school if they are there to be left in 'perfect freedom' and without the least hint of suggestion of any kind: would it be unreasonable to expect 'the teacher of art' to explain to his pupils the meaning of such words as Quality, Composition, Perspective, and the first elements of simple technique, if indeed he has enough knowledge of them himself to do so?

We, the artists, may well ask ourselves whether or not we can help the children to retain what qualities they may possess, to develop and add to them. We should at least refuse to join in this new game of 'Let's pretend' organized more and more frequently by grown-ups, presumably for their own satisfaction or profit; in this new version of musical chairs the empty seats are apparently to be competed for by such as Willy Jones. . . age 8; William Blake . . . ageless; Daisy Smith . . . age 4; Pablo Picasso . . . still young; John Williams . . . age 7. No! little Daisy's drawing is not 'just like a Picasso' and no amount of wishful thinking will prevent Johnny's picture from being as different from a work of Henri Matisse, Miró, Seurat, Henri Rousseau or Juan Gris, as a night-light by the child's bed is different from a star. Let us insist, gently but very very firmly, that even 'a little genius' (and what grown-up does not know of one?) will be obliged to study the science of drawing and painting for many years in order to understand all there is to learn before he—or she—can even hope to merit the hitherto glorious title of artist.

For the rest, let us all admire some of the drawings made by children for the reasons which make us all inclined to love some children; for their unique and authentic childishness.

EDWARD SACKVILLE-WEST

MUSIC:

SOME ASPECTS OF THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEM

III

BETWEEN the *Michelangelo Sonnets* and the inappropriately named *Serenade*, which at present constitutes the peak of his achievement, Britten has written three short choral works which have an importance in his *œuvre* apart from the utter charm and grace with which they are written. The *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, the *Ceremony of Carols*, and the festival cantata, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, are consummate pieces of music; they are also a testament of youth in that they display that Blake-like re-creation of innocence out of experience which is part of the artist's duty to himself. It is difficult to imagine music more glassily transparent than these concise and touching pieces. Their smiling radiance is far indeed from the painful ardour of the *Michelangelo Sonnets*. The *Carols*, especially, have a medieval quality which is as definite as it is hard to pin down. I suspect, however, that the explanation lies in the humorous approach to a venerable subject (much more obvious in *Rejoice in the Lamb*) which was a salient feature of the medieval mind and which has come down to us through what I have compendiously called the Fun Fair.

The *Serenade*—settings for tenor, horn and string orchestra, of poems by Cotton, Tennyson, Blake, Ben Jonson, Keats, and of the Lyke Wake Dirge—is in every sense a *tour de force*. The subject is Night and its prestigia: the lengthening shadow, the distant bugle at sunset, the Baroque panoply of the starry sky, the heavy angels of sleep; but also the cloak of evil—the worm in the heart of the rose, the sense of sin in the heart of man. The whole sequence forms an Elegy or Nocturnal (as Donne would have called it), resuming the thoughts and images suitable to evening; but the total effect is serious and profound, and the associations with any kind of serenade are therefore to seek. All the composer's qualities are present in superlative degree: first of all

sensibility, quick as a fish's fin, to a poetic image. The shadow lengthens to a point in the simple descent of the notes of a major chord; the worm burrows in the alternation of a minor second; Death approaches in the rusty armour of an uncouth but strict fugue; in the nimble tune of the *Hymn to Diana* the voice and horn weave round each other, making an embroidery of stars; and in Keats' *Sonnet to Sleep*, the soft string chords and the endless, flowing arioso of the voice enchant the listener with a spell that is cool and balsamic, less a melody than a delicious aroma. The sense of fitness is very remarkable: each movement is couched not only in the form that would best express the poem, but in such a way that great variety is achieved. How else could a composer prevail on listeners to accept four slow movements in succession? Again, the harmonic scaffolding is deceptively simple; but, on examination, nearly every movement will be found to have two or three tonal centres (the Keats sonnet has four) which provide a logical status for the most surprising passages of harmony. This is in fact Britten's characteristic form of modulation, which is almost never chromatic and is one of his cleverest and most individual devices of composition.

There is not a superfluous note in this score, which helps to account once more for the desiderated 'clean and clear' line. But there is a further point. Two of the movements—the *Elegy* and the Keats sonnet—call for solutions of the problem of specious time which I discussed in the first part of this essay.

Blake's tiny and terrible poem, *O Rose, Thou art Sick*, is a considerable drama which could not possibly be rendered by a 'straight' setting. What Britten has done is to embed the verses—an intensely concentrated arioso—between a prologue and epilogue which gives the whole movement the spaciousness and solemnity of the whole act of an opera. Indeed, the change of key at the climax of the prologue seems to lift the curtain before our eyes, just as the return of the rhythmic figure, after the last words, brings it down again. Only an imagination of a very rare kind could have hit on this solution to the problem. Within its limits, this is a revolutionary way of setting a lyric.

The problem set by Keats' sonnet is, in some ways, even more difficult and the solution proportionately more dazzling. Britten has approached the poem in a totally different manner from that which he used for the *Michelangelo Sonnets*. In the earlier works

he simplified the verbal texture by means of the musical form; in the later he unfurls the thought by means of a tightly compressed arioso on to which the sonnet fits like a skin. Starting just after the very first beat, the voice advances into the poem like a finger into a glove and ceases only when the last word is reached. The expression is so intense, the melody so beautifully moulded, the accompaniment kept so strictly within the framework of a single figure, that we are hardly aware of duration at all and have to consult the score in order to persuade ourselves that the fourteen lines of blank verse are indeed all included. And this is right, since the aim of this sonnet is a unified, instantaneous impression.

The secret of this extraordinary performance lies partly in compression and partly in the great subtlety of the voice line. A lesser composer, faced with the formidable task of setting a sonnet to music, might—at any time since the death of Wagner—have confided the main burden of expression to the accompaniment, leaving the voice to fit in some kind of recitative as best it could. And since the Wagnerian arioso is in some sort the equivalent of dramatic blank verse, this might have seemed a natural course to take. But, just as blank verse is really no longer *de mise* for dramatic purposes, arioso must now be carried a step further, if it is to serve the same purposes in the realm of lyrico-dramatic music. It must, that is to say, be at once dramatic and (what Wagnerian arioso too seldom was) instinct with an independent vocal beauty. In his settings of Blake and Keats Britten seems to me to have solved this urgent problem in a manner that may well hold the seeds of a very important development; and the sources of his solution are to be found in the operas of Tchaikowsky, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakoff.

The *Serenade* resumes many a learnt lesson. That which was tentative in the *Sinfonia*, in the *String Quartet*, in *Les Illuminations*, is here restated with a difference—with a deeper conviction and a firmer tone. It is in fact the work of a master, and in the multiplicity of its invention is likely to exercise an important influence on the future of English composition.¹

¹ The only fault I have to find is in the composer's dealing with the poet's metre. The constancy with which he allows an unaccented word to fall on a strong beat is always disconcerting and sometimes disastrous to the meaning and rhythm. The fact that this very injudicious behaviour occurs in all Britten's vocal works suggests a certain insensitiveness to prosody as such.

It should be clear from the above sketch of Britten's development that his distinctive style has been gradually moving in the direction of opera. His talent for vocal writing, combined with a striking dramatic sense, seems to indicate a born composer of operas. I have already mentioned his aptitude for finding phrases that delineate the visible world, as well as those which express character. Examples are to be found all through his work, but nowhere more remarkably than in the incidental music which he wrote for my own broadcast drama, *The Rescue*. During the composition of this score, which contains some very beautiful stuff, I was continually struck by the unerring instinct with which Britten hit upon the right musical backing for whatever it was I had written, or—alternatively—rose imaginatively to any occasion the script presented for quasi-independent music.

The opera on which he is at present engaged is based on the verse tale, *Peter Grimes*, by Crabbe. The libretto is grim and unromantic, and, besides giving the composer an opportunity to express more overtly than he has yet done his feelings about East Anglian scene, it should, I believe, prove an English equivalent of Berg's *Wozzeck*. By this I do not, of course, mean that it will *sound* like that rebarbative work of genius, but rather that, in its attitude to the tragedy of a human being and his aspirations, in its ascetic avoidance of the pretty, in its concentration on a single theme to the exclusion of many of the legitimate appurtenances of 'grand' opera, *Peter Grimes* may—if carried through successively—be the first considerable English opera written in the continental tradition since Handel.¹ Those portions of it which I have been able to hear stand out in my mind by reason of the extreme brilliance with which conversational English is treated. It was clearly time that something was

¹ The only other operas which deserve consideration in this respect are Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers* and Delius' *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. But while the first will probably maintain a precarious position in English musical history by reason of the passionate sincerity which informs it, the second I would disqualify on the grounds that it is an idyll rather than an opera. Those who have heard it broadcast will, I think, agree that invisibility improves it; in the theatre not all the floods of indubitably lovely music can prevent us from observing the lameness and inconsequence of the libretto. Whatever faults it may prove to have, *Peter Grimes* will certainly be an opera in the fullest sense of the word.

done about the absurdity of English recitative—an absurdity that can neither be blinked nor surmounted by cleverness in the choice of words used. It might have seemed obvious before now that the way out of the difficulty was to shorten drastically the length of the notes, in consideration of the preponderance of closed vowels in the English language—vocables which sound natural only if uttered in a rapid succession of musical sounds. And this is in fact what Britten has done, in the tempestuous first act of *Peter Grimes*. The dialogue patters along at speech speed (as does, for instance, the Baron Ochs in Act, I of *Der Rosenkavalier*), broadening out into passages of arioso when the emotion requires it; and the whole thing is built into a symphonic structure which manipulates the specious time of the events. The intention throughout—if I have not misunderstood the composer's own explanation—is to reserve the whole orchestral forces for interludes and passages where the voice is not paramount, and at all other times to allow the voices to carry the chief burden of the expression.

An artist is in danger from himself at every moment of his career. Our end is our beginning, and the dangers that beset youth continue to work long after they have been apparently overcome. Failure in art, after a brilliant beginning, is always a failure of *character*. The surface brilliance, the versatility, the passion for applause, that were the bane of Britten's early music, will continue to lie in wait for unguarded moments. To each his own hell, but Britten's—if I am not much mistaken—resembles that into which Richard Strauss long ago descended. It is a hell in which Technique reigns despotically over the rag-hung skeletons of once lovely melodies, and the broken furniture of late romantic harmony clutters uselessly great spaces empty of everything but an avid desire to capture.

If I utter this warning, it is not because I think Benjamin Britten likely to peter out at this stage. All precedents are against any such likelihood. Just now, at any rate, he is 'standing on the top of golden hours', because the source of music within him is pouring itself out just at the moment when this country sorely needed a new composer of genius who should unite a first class professional equipment with a vision of sensuous beauty untarnished by experience.

IV

To be a composer in a traditionless age is an immense disadvantage. Britten, who has felt this keenly, has sought to overcome it by rigidly discarding those composers (e.g. Beethoven and Brahms) whose influence would have impeded the free growth of his own musical personality.¹ Michael Tippett has done likewise, but far more drastically. His musical personality is at once more esoteric and more international than Britten's. There are some obvious reasons for this. Of strong Cornish stock on his father's side, he was brought up to some extent on the Continent, and though his actual musical training was English, the influence of nineteenth- or twentieth-century English music is conspicuously absent from his own. Indeed, he is the only considerable composer I can call to mind who has somehow managed to by-pass the nineteenth century—at all events as exhibited in its most characteristic features. His contemporaneity, therefore, rests partly on the revival of musical textures and idioms that recall those of an age that may be seen to resemble our own—the second half of the sixteenth century—and partly on a certain 'prophetic' quality which is as difficult to pin down as Britten's medievalism, but which disengages itself powerfully in the experience of listening to his music. Michael Tippett, even more essentially perhaps than Benjamin Britten, belongs to the future of music.

Correspondences should never be pressed too hard, but what is worth noting in the parallel between our age and the watershed of the Renaissance and Baroque eras is the way in which the best art of both periods, while reflecting the storm and stress of the times, contrive a certain necessary detachment—a florid but determined spirituality which enables them to ride along on the top of the storm—part of it, yet not submerged by it.² This is true of both the composers I am here considering, but in Tippett's case the apparent detachment is greater, except in the

¹ It is perfectly legitimate, in the interests of self-preservation, for a composer to 'dislike' a great figure like Beethoven, while it is wholly illegitimate for a critic to do so.

² The point is even truer of an earlier transitional period—the fourteenth century; and indeed correspondences (unconscious, no doubt, and bound up with the general evolution of the art, considered apart from individuals) are not wanting between Tippett's polyphonic style and that of Guillaume de Machaut and the *Ars Nova*.

oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, where the trend of sympathy emerges unequivocally. At the first performance of that extraordinary work many people, who had been accustomed to think of Tippett as rather a dry stick, were astonished and bowled over by the warmth of human feeling it displayed. But in truth I think they mistook the nature of the impact they received. Where words are united to music it is not difficult for a competent musician to pull the strings of a sentimental pity; it is far more difficult, as well as more enduring, to move an instructed audience by means of an emotion felt in the heart but expressed through a medium chosen, not primarily for its sensuous qualities, but as an organ of intellectual persuasion. Like all music, Tippett's is rhetorical, but the eloquence is not essentially that of poetry.

Not usually, that is to say; but there is one work of his—a fairly recent one—in which he has approached as near to the rhapsody as his style will admit: I mean the *scena* for tenor voice and piano, *Boyhood's End*. I shall return later on, from a technical point of view, to this most original and arresting composition; my reason for going straight to it now is a conviction that it is a more personally revealing work than anything else of Tippett's. The words are that very beautiful passage from 'Far Away and Long Ago' in which W. H. Hudson sets down his boyhood's dream as it seemed to him in middle age. The emotion is an ecstatic gratitude, not a regret: instead of dragging his youth behind him like a sad ghost, as so many writers do, Hudson carries it with him in the eternal present of his life. And it is plain, from Tippett's choice of the passage, that this is his own, rather rare, attitude to life—an attitude summed up, with the energy of a blowing flag, in the coloratura setting of the words: 'I want only to keep what I have.' Throughout this piece—and indeed everywhere else in Tippett's small output of music—thought and feeling are integrated by the muscles of a powerful intellect, so that we never feel that nostalgic undertow characteristic of most English composers since the turn of the eighteenth century. It is this attitude—a form, after all, of courage—which gives Tippett's music that prophetic strain I have mentioned. Not to allow your mental balance to be upset by the conflicting claims of the present is, in an artist, to be something more than adequate to the present; and to be more than adequate to the present is to stake out a claim to the future.

This forward-leaning quality of Tippett's music is evident from the outset in the *Concerto for Double String Orchestra*, at present probably his best-known work. It is on the fast movements of this concerto, as well as on the two *String Quartets* and some passages of the oratorio, that I rely mainly for my parallel with the 'conceited' style of the early Baroque, though in the last movement of the concerto, in particular, you will find a very striking feature peculiar to Tippett alone: the sudden superimposition, on a horizontal texture of moving parts, of a strong theme which seems to belong essentially to a vertical (i.e. homophonic) ensemble. I believe this to be a musical image of the Will which, in its controlled forms, can give rise to beauty as well as any other feature of the personality. Musically, of course, this procedure may be regarded as a mere question of scansion; but the effect in performance (other examples occur in the *String Quartets*) is electrifying and reminds us that Michael Tippett is not a Cornishman for nothing. 'I want only to keep what I have'—viz. the husbanded beauties of observed nature; a mischievous delight in the secret absurdities of human beings, coupled with a deep realization of their dignity and pathos; and finally a remarkable possession of himself which shows in a clear knowledge of the shape he wishes his life to retain. This shape can, I think, be followed in the slow movement of the *Double Concerto*, the most moving tune Tippett has written. It belongs to an order of beauty which is uncommon in his music, but reveals the psychological link between himself and Britten. The specious time projected by this ravishing melody is fully realized by the duration of the movement, which is a true slow movement—not the page or two of perfunctory improvisation before settling down to a clattering Toccata, which we are so used to in the music of many contemporary composers who favour a contrapuntal style.

Tippett's instinct for the specious time involved by his themes is not quite as sure as Britten's. The *Double Concerto*, the *Piano Sonata* and *Boyhood's End* all show that he knows when to expatiate, just as the oratorio finds him exercising a compression most unusual in this kind of music, but here bound up with the character of the text. But the middle section of the slow movement I have been speaking of could be felt as unduly long, while some at least of the choral sections of the oratorio give an impression

of abruptness, because the momentum gained in the course of the movement (and a Handelian energy is an outstanding feature of all Tippett's quick movements) does not seem to have been adequately exhausted. Another reason for this sense of abruptness is the curiously perfunctory nature of his cadences. It is not only that he favours the Plagal cadence, which is anyhow relatively ambiguous, but what seems like a sudden cessation of interest in what is going on. This may in reality be only a distaste for the endless conclusions of nineteenth-century music, though it is to be observed that the rhetorical nature of the art demands a definite exit from the stage; but nothing can excuse the final bars of *Boyhood's End* (a really wicked piece of writing, which calls for revision); and section-endings in the oratorio, though less unmanageable, are not to me very much more satisfying.¹

To return to Tippett's progress as a composer, the remarkable but rather tentative *Piano Sonata* displays his melodic and figuristic invention (the work is all but unplayable), while the more wholly successful *Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra on a Theme by Handel* demonstrates, as clearly as the oratorio, the limits of his ability as a dramatist. This is, I think, the weakest part of his imaginative equipment—just as it is one of the strongest parts of Britten's. Tippett's imagination is on the one hand lyrical; on the other didactic; it is never dramatic; it cannot delineate, as Britten's so often does; even in *Boyhood's End* the verbal imagery is expressed in the vaguest of musical equivalents. To have no sense of the theatre is by no means fatal to a composer, and in the *Fantasia* a Platonic subtlety of argument takes the place of the drama usual on such occasions. But in 'A Child of Our Time', which tells a terrible and pathetic story, some dramatic tension is essential, and it is just in those sections where the story moves on that the music fails to rise above a few halting gestures.

The *String Quartets* are quite another matter. Their beauty is great, but depends less on sensuous appeal than that of Tippett's other works. They have the ironic exactitude, the austerity, and the sardonic acceptance of what is, that characterize the best

¹ In the care with which he sets words to music Tippett is in certain respects Britten's superior. The skill with which the prose of W. H. Hudson is woven into the organic texture of voice and piano part, in *Boyhood's End*, is quite extraordinary.

contemporary poetry. I am reminded especially, in this connection, of Louis MacNeice's 'Precursors', a poem two-thirds of which is devoted to the wry exposition of an idea, in language which only a fine craftsmanship keeps within the bounds of poetry. And then, in the last verse, we are given an image, which is not only beautiful and original in itself, but profits immeasurably by the unassisted logic of what has preceded it.

'Yet one or two we have known who had the gusto
Of wind or water-spout, and one or two
Who carry an emerald lamp behind their faces
And—during thunderstorms—the light comes shining through.'

The pleasure we take in this (if we take it at all) is due to a recognition of the cleverness with which we have been led. Poetry like this does not lend itself to day-dreaming, neither does the music of Michael Tippett—especially in the quartets, which have a scholastic astuteness that is akin to precise syntax.

At this point some consideration of Tippett's harmonic idiom imposes itself. It is an idiom much more systematic, much less open to accretions, and withal a good deal less accessible, than Britten's. On the other hand, though sometimes abstruse, it is never weak, because its essentially polyphonic structure renders it impervious to the feeble commonplaces which are the bane of purely homophonic idioms. I have already indicated what I believe to be the original provenience of Tippett's style, but on first acquaintance two quite modern composers spring to mind as probable influences: Hindemith and Busoni. As a matter of fact, Tippett admits to having learnt much from Hindemith, though he is quite unacquainted with Busoni's music. This does not, I think, rule out the evident resemblance of a characteristic Tippett sequence to one by Busoni, since the *Fantasia*, the acrobatic part songs, and the oratorios, are heirs of Busoni (and of Hindemith) exactly in the sense in which those composers' later work derives ultimately from late Renaissance polyphony. However that may be, it is often found that two artists whose styles seem closely similar have in fact been quite unaware of each other and have merely reached the same spot by different, converging roads. The intellectual power and the unearthly spiritual quality, which so wonderfully inform Busoni's finest music, are of the same nature as those which we

find in the high spots of 'A Child of Our Time'.¹ And that nature proceeds, not primarily from the melodic line, but from the rhythms and textures of the whole organic material. As Tippett himself has put it, speaking of the first movement of his *Double Concerto*: 'The variety of the texture is part of the pattern used to amplify the form'.

You cannot have texture without harmony, and perhaps the most salient feature of Tippett's is the prevalence of enharmonic change. Now modulation is musical metaphor, but enharmonic modulation is the equivalent of a pun. The arts reflect one another at all periods, and it cannot be a chance that at a time when composers were particularly fond of this form of harmonic conceit the poets were equally fond of its verbal equivalent. Take the following, by George Herbert:

'O Who will show me those delights on high?

Echo. I.

Thou Echo, thou art mortal, all men know.

Echo. No.

Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?

Echo. Leaves.

And are there any leaves, that still abide?

Echo. Bide.

What leaves are they? Impart the matter wholly.

Echo. Holy.'

and so on. The point is important for the understanding of Tippett's often rather angular harmony, but the cause of his predilection for enharmonic procedure lies rather in the arcana of personality. The harmless malice—as of a masked (and therefore invisible) Harlequin—which I have noted in Michael Tippett's attitude to other people, finds a perfect expression in this form of harmonic mischief.

Apart from this idiosyncrasy, his later idiom, as displayed in the *Second Quartet*, the oratorio, and *Boyhood's End*, is a complex polytonal structure akin to those of Hindemith and Bela Bartok. How flexible and subtle his technique can be is shown in the

¹ Compare, especially, the huge pedal point which forms the climax of this work with the dream of youth at the end of the second act of Busoni's *Doktor Faust*; incidentally, both passages deal with the idea of Spring, and the close resemblance of the musical imagery here bears strongly on my suggestion of a brain-graph sketched in the first part of this essay.

settings of negro spirituals which punctuate the sections of 'A Child of Our Time'. To have used anything so strongly flavoured for a purpose of this kind was a very bold step, and I shall not pretend that, to my own taste, the emotional effect is entirely convincing; but the transparent delicacy of the part-writing, and the manner in which the characteristic harmony of the rest of the work is 'mitigated' to suit the tunes of the spirituals, is quite masterly.

Elsewhere the *sound* of his music takes getting used to. Although he is a good contrapuntist in the sense that all the parts, even in a purely instrumental composition, are essentially vocal, it must be admitted that (with the significant exceptions I have named) the initial impression made by his music is likely to be powerful rather than attractive. It has none of the vivid colour, the immediate dramatic effectiveness, the winning sensuous beauty, of Britten's best work. Its strength is that of consistency and rational construction informed by an emotional and intransigent nature. In some ways he is a more mature artist than Britten; he is certainly more imitable than that mercurial composer, and I think it possible that finally his work will prove the more *seminal* of the two. In the last analysis it is a composer's harmony that others imitate (this is true at all events of the last hundred and fifty years). Britten's is too unmannered to be of use to anyone but himself, while Tippett's has a structure and a logic which seem to point forward to developments beyond our present confusion.

A new harmonic idiom, to have the tradition-building force of the classical system, must be equally precise and thorough. The atonal¹ system conforms to these requirements, but has so far shown itself inferior as a medium of emotional (as distinct from intellectual) expression; and that is a severe drawback. Thus it seems at least doubtful whether it is possible to organize a completely satisfactory musical system on a basis of pure chromaticism. Time will show. At present the chief difficulty in listening to music of this type is that of perceiving the composer's norm of dissonance, without which clue it is often impossible to

¹ Absolutely strict atonal music, of which not very much exists outside the works of Schönberg and Webern, is medieval in spirit. The severe emphasis on rules, the belief that beauty and truth reside in the precision of a mathematical logic, the contempt of sensuous aids, the reliance on formulæ as a kind of magic—all this is more characteristic of a Thomas Aquinas than of the practitioner of classical humanism.

decide whether a sequence is moving towards greater tension or towards relaxation. And the point is capital, for comprehension as well as for delight.

Tippett is at present at work upon a symphony. As he is a very slow worker, it seems improbable that we shall hear this before next year, and I have as yet no light on its character. The best, in one kind or another, is certainly to be expected, for Tippett has reached that stage where, as Luther said of Josquin Després: 'He is master of the notes; others are mastered by them'. There is only one thing, as I see it, which could diminish this man of genius into a man of talent, and that is the tendency to scholasticism which afflicts all born teachers and emerges, like dusty clockwork, in the first movement of the *Double Concerto* and here and there in the *Quartets*. No doubt we could do with a Max Reger in this country, but not at the expense of a Michael Tippett.

I have spoken of Tippett as a born teacher, and his pupils at Morley College would, I think, bear me out in this assertion. He is certainly one of the liveliest lecturers on music I have ever heard, and his briskness, perception, humour and professional devotion to his art are the ideal make-up for a *chef d'école*. Moreover, by his intense sympathy with, and understanding of, young people he is in a unique position to express and resolve in his music the ambiguous soul of youth which is the tragic under-song of England today.

V

The foregoing analysis of two composers whom I believe to be of unique importance, both for the present and for the future, seems, on re-reading it, to have served only to bring out their points of dissimilarity. And, to be sure, each is in many important respects the other's opposite. In Benjamin Britten we have lyrical poetry, a sensuous imagination, an emphasis on melody, a strong sense of drama, a gift for musical description, a heart-on-sleeve directness of appeal, bound up with a profusion, a versatility, and a rapidity of invention, which have astonished the musical world.

Michael Tippett's, on the other hand, is, despite a bubbling surface, a darker and more secret nature. Where Britten is so entirely English, even in appearance, Tippett's physique alone

reminds one that the Cornish have Iberian blood.¹ The beauty of his counterpoint is that of impassioned argument, rather than of limpid statement; melody is subordinated to organization of parts; drama and description yield to an intellectual exploration of the inner man—a process which distils a poetry rich rather than easy. And, like all distillations, it is accomplished slowly—drop by drop.

Yet the resemblances are there too, and they are important enough to unite these two men over musical issues that have given rise to peevish complaints about a 'clique'. Taunts of this kind are invariably hurled by envious sufferers from a sense of personal failure; and so may be disregarded. That Britten and Tippett should have come to maturity at roughly the same moment (though at different ages) was an accident and a happy one, for it has served to bring forward certain artistic desiderata which have long been neglected by English composers of whatever school: a firmly professional attitude to the arts, at all levels, and its corollary—a complete absence of affectation and mystical humbug; a care for the formal element, to the exclusion of any kind of fumbling; a sincerity of feeling which renders their music antiseptic to sentimentality; and finally a lack of interest in decoration which, though by no means always an advantage, is probably salutary enough at this juncture, as may be deduced from a glance at the other arts.

Prophecies are the prerogative of those in whom lively sensibilities go hand in hand with strong convictions, and I feel much tempted to posit an important as well as a dazzling future for these two composers. Yet in times threatened by so many kinds of catastrophe prophecy is more than usually futile, so I will content myself with expressing the conviction that Benjamin Britten and Michael Tippett are potentially great composers who have it in their power to change, for generations to come, the podgy and obstructed expression which has for a century and a half degraded the face of English music.

¹ Germane to this point is the fact, sometimes forgotten, that the art of the Baroque period was given its first great impetus by the Jesuits and therefore that the whole spirit of the movement in its early stages, resumed by the gigantic figure of El Greco, belongs in its essence to Spain.

AUGUSTUS JOHN

FRAGMENT OF
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY—XII

IT might have been in 1926 or thereabouts that I visited Germany. Lord D'Abernon, then Ambassador at Berlin, had invited me to stay with him at the British Embassy. I found a friend of ours, Mrs. Fleming, also on a visit to the German capital. Lord D'Abernon deputed a member of his diplomatic corps, Mr. Alan P. Graves, to show us about the city. We could not have wished for a better cicerone.

Gustav Streseman was at that time the leading statesman in Germany and our Ambassador induced him to sit to me for his portrait. Though cast in no heroic mould, Streseman was evidently a man of forcible character and also—when not dealing with his political opponents—a sympathetic, cultured and friendly personality.

His portrait turned out an uncompromising likeness. Stresemann faced it bravely, but I could see his wife was taken aback. A lively and accomplished Jewess, Frau Stresemann was always to the fore in the social life of Berlin. I painted also Frau Horstmann, and Mrs. Gilbert, an American. Both were admirable types, but for lack of time the pictures were never finished satisfactorily. However, in spite of failure I cannot regret having made, in these ladies, two such memorable friends.

'Lally' Horstmann took me to see Max Liebermann, whose pictures met the eye in every art dealer's shop in Berlin. The dear old Jewish gentleman showed me his treasures, his Rembrandt drawings and etchings, his collection of little-known secondary German artists, and his pictures by his friends of the Impressionist School. He claimed a little Manet, hanging on the wall, to be the earliest effort by that painter. 'But,' I remarked, 'it is the work of a master.' 'Yes,' replied Liebermann, 'Manet was born a master.' 'You knew Cezanne?' I inquired; '*Ah celui-là n'était pas commode*' . . .

Alan P. Graves conducted me to various nocturnal establishments where we found ourselves singularly out of place among a

clientele representing almost exclusively thep revalent 'Uranian' cult. At that time, by payment of a small fee, male persons claiming the necessary psychological maladjustment were furnished by the police with licences to adopt female attire. . . . Alan P. Graves, whose propensities were eminently correct, used to say that German women were the most naturally affectionate people in the world. He should know what he was talking about, and to test his theory has since married one. I, without his experience, was struck by the unaffected charm of some of the women I came across.

The Hotel Adlon was just round the corner of the Wilhelmstrasse. I made constant use of it for it provided a pleasant relief from the slightly oppressive grandeur and isolation of the Embassy. One day a very robust gentleman came into the bar and began chatting with me. He had just arrived from Sweden by air. His name was Count Luckner, and before long he had told me his surprising history. It was he who, with his ship the *See Adler*, had run our blockade successfully, an exploit in which audacity was reinforced by ruse. Many of our ships were sent to the bottom by this formidable seaman, including that in which he himself had first served as a runaway apprentice. This, he said, broke his heart. But 'he had never in his life left a man to drown.' Pleasantly boastful, he recounted his adventures and triumphs till wrecked on a South Sea island whence, in an open boat with half a dozen men, he made the heroic voyage to Fiji where, half dead with scurvy, he gave himself up. Before we parted he presented me with his book, *See Adler*, duly inscribed. I was to meet him once more at Boston, Massachusetts.

Lord D'Abernon, or 'D'Ab', as his friends called him, with characteristic thoughtfulness, had provided me with a key of the side entrance to the Embassy, thus leaving me free to return at any hour of the night without waking up the household. Entering by this means, I passed through the Chancellery and up a back-stairs to my room. One evening while engaged in solitary exploration of the strange and monstrous city, I found myself in a somewhat forlorn and dilapidated region intersected by a canal or it might have been the river Spree. A sign over a door across the road by the waterside now attracted my attention. *Bodega*. Now the name Bodega in other European cities connotes according to my experience, a respectable kind of tavern, to which an array of huge vats

of wines and spirits communicates atmospheric richness and stability. The establishment I was now contemplating exhibited, however, little of the external marks of distinction to which its title had accustomed me. It looked indeed a little mean, a little furtive. Undeterred, I pushed open the door and entered a large dimly lit saloon furnished with tables and the usual counter on one side behind which the lady of the house presided.

A short stairway at the back gave access through a doorway to further accommodation. A few clients, all female, were distributed about the room. Upon ordering champagne, a noticeable stir was apparent among these ladies, who, one by one, now approached my table and with the utmost politeness inquired after my health. Begging them to be seated, I called for glasses and soon we were all on friendly terms. Encouraged by the frank good humour of my companions, I ordered further supplies of refreshment and did not omit to include our hostess in my invitation. With every bottle my popularity grew and the good nature of the convives became more marked. You could not, in fact, have wished to meet a heartier bevy of wenches. The scene must have been quite Rembrandtesque to an onlooker; especially when the door above the stairs opened and a young girl appeared in the shadow for a few moments, beckoning to me in secret but unequivocal merriment. As the hour grew late, I turned to consult my wrist-watch. It was gone! Hereupon I made vigorous protests and in the remnants of my schoolboy German, referred menacingly to the *Englische Botschaft* and the *Polizei*. At this there was general consternation. But someone had remarked the disappearance of a young woman but a few minutes before, and at once one or two men who by that time had arrived were sent after her. They quickly overtook the delinquent who, when haled back, produced, with proper contrition, my watch from her stocking. The sobbing girl was then subjected to a fierce tirade from the proprietress, highly indignant that '*der arme Engländer*' should have been robbed on her premises. But another bottle of sweet champagne, this time 'on the house', soon restored the situation. I would never have been guilty of this tasteless exhibition had the watch not been the gift of an esteemed friend and thus had a sentimental value.

I returned to the Wilhelmstrasse well pleased with my evening but above all I was haunted by the apparition of the merry young

girl in the doorway; she still haunts me, and is the only individual figure of the Bodega party I remember with any clearness.

I met in Berlin the distinguished archaeologist Professor von Lecoq, and was shown the remarkable frescoes he had extracted and conveyed back from caves in the Gobi desert. He had spent some years of great hardship while engaged in this undertaking but, as he said, 'it was worth it'. He pointed out in these works the links between Greek and Chinese art and the transition of the Apollo type into that of the Buddha. Amidst these frescoes were seen panels representing blond, blue-eyed van Gogh-like personages and one wondered who these people could have been. Patterns occurred identical with such as are seen on our playing-cards.

Potsdam, the lakes at Wannsee, 'Sans Souci', being within easy reach, provided agreeable pretexts for a run-out after sittings. Here Mrs. Gilbert with her car made herself more than serviceable. Though occasionally I visited the central vortex of Berlin life and gaiety I never got to know it well and it only bewildered me. Having a week or two to myself I decided to travel and see something more of the country; so set out for Dresden, then Nuremburg and finally Munich, where I hung about for a week or so. From repeated visits to the Pinacothek I retain but one clear and ineffaceable impression—a head of the Virgin by El Greco. Of the recent Munich school, one painter in particular excited my interest—von Mares.

SOME ADVENTURES IN PORTRAITURE

My portrait of Sir Gerald du Maurier apart from other considerations, was a good likeness but perhaps, from the point of view of a fashionable actor, insufficiently permeated with sex allure. In my innocence I had omitted to repair his broken nose. I always thought the picture should by rights hang in the Garrick Club, where du Maurier frequented and entertained largely. But finally it was bought by Tallulah Bankhead and remains in America.

★ ★ ★

Lord Fisher was the very arch-type of a sailor. He had started his career in the old wooden ships. He told me his qualifying examination simply consisted in reciting the Lord's Prayer and drinking a glass of sherry. He 'couldn't spell "cat"'. The Duchess

E

of Hamilton invariably attended his sittings, and I began but failed to complete within the time available a full-length portrait of this lady. The Admiral used to remark, 'You won't find as fine a figure of a woman, and a Duchess at that, at every street corner'. This was true and my failure was all the more regrettable. Fisher, like many great men, loved the simplest jokes and was full of such drollery. He liked walking up and down with me in Mallord Street, but no further than the length of a quarter-deck, which for him was the ideal ambit. The night before he might have been sitting up drinking champagne to all hours with Winston Churchill or dancing indefatigably. He described the above-mentioned statesman as 'a menace to the Empire' but seemed to enjoy his company. He was a keen Bible student but would have nothing to do with the Revised Version. He, like Queen Victoria, was convinced that the inhabitants of this country were of the lost tribes of Israel. Whatever he may have thought of it, he stood unshaken before my picture, but I was glad I wasn't a naval officer or his 'Sack the lot' policy might have come into operation.

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I was commissioned by the Bank of England to paint the Governor's portrait. An excellent subject he proved to be, with his curious air of preoccupation as though troubled with graver problems than beset other men. He preserved a detachment as regards my efforts which suited me very well, for I deprecate the intervention of my sitters. Their comments, even when reasonable, are rarely helpful; more often than not they tend to corrupt or at least interrupt the artist's vision. To see with other people's eyes is a dangerous surrender though it may be the secret of safety and even lead to an ignominious kind of success. With admirable unconcern the great banker permitted me to proceed with my task in spiritual solitude and refrained from glancing at the picture even when completed. Sometimes Lord D'Abernon would come to chat with my sitter. The subject appeared to be High Finance. I was not tempted to join in these discussions. My own problems came first and it wasn't difficult to offset Mr. Montague Norman's indifference to my activities by a corresponding disregard of his. There were moments when our acquaintance seemed to show signs of ripening a little, but the immense responsibilities of the Dictator of Threadneedle Street

proved a bar to anything approaching intimacy. It was in a spirit then of severe self-restraint that we used to part on the door-step of No. 21 Mallord Street, whence, after looking this way and that and finding the coast clear, Mr. Norman would set forth to regain his car, parked as usual discreetly round the corner.

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My wife and I had made an appointment to lunch with Signor Marconi. The great pioneer of wireless met us at Sandbanks and we were rowed to his yacht *Elettra* which then lay off Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour. The luncheon party included Miss 'Poots' van Rallte, the Infanta Beatriz of Spain, and her husband the Infante Don Alfonso. I thought the social atmosphere of the gathering lacked warmth. Marconi's glass eye shone with a cold and distant beam hardly compensated for by the polite twinkle in the other. Sometimes I asked myself which was which . . . After the repast we were ushered into the wireless room where a formidable-looking apparatus was tuned up. Presently strains of music were emitted. A band was heard; not a good one, but, we were assured, it was playing in Paris. The legendary inventor of the Alphabet claimed for it, that Truth henceforth would be accessible to all; but, someone remarked, it would make the dissemination of lies equally practicable. As we know, a similar dichotomy is noticeable in the programmes of the B.B.C.

Later on, at the suggestion of Lady Howard de Walden, I painted the Infanta Beatriz, attired, as I insisted, *à l'Espagnol*, with high comb, black mantilla, fan and a dress of cloth of gold. My subject, not being Spanish in the least, looked perfectly Goyaesque in this costume. Similarly the Infante Don Alfonso would pass anywhere as a typical Englishman of the best type. This blond and sympathetic Prince, having an aptitude for mechanics, was at this time working hard but happily in a garage. During our rests, I introduced my royal sitter to a popular game of skill: it was odd, I thought, to find myself playing 'shove ha'penny' with a grand-daughter of Queen Victoria.

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A Japanese friend of mine, Mr. Gonnoske Komai, arranged for me to paint the Crown Prince of Japan during his visit to England. One hour was allotted me, starting at 8 o'clock in the

morning. The future Mikado arrived punctually, accompanied by a suite of nobles, admirals and courtiers. Hirohito was an inconspicuous young man attired in a navy blue suit. Without being handsome, his features denoted breeding and distinction, and his manner was modest, easy and natural. Having enthroned him, I took a painting stool and set to work, the entourage meanwhile remained standing at a respectful distance. At a given moment, one personage, greatly daring, approached my sacred sitter and attempted, but without much success, to smooth His Royal Highness's unruly shock of blue-black hair. At the stroke of nine the sitting was suspended. Komai, taking me apart, indicated that I should offer my picture to the Prince. Rather mystified, I did so, and the gift was graciously accepted. Some months later I received a beautiful roll of Japanese script together with a voluminous packet of banknotes. This was the Prince's present to me.

It was the first and only time Japanese royalty had sat for a European artist. Komai told me that if I went to Japan I would now be *persona grata* at the Imperial Court, where the portrait now hangs, and that if I took the chair, a rather heavy one, on which His Royal Highness had sat, I could dispose of it in Japan for its weight in gold.

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Among the people it has been my lot to portray with almost catastrophic results was the late Lord Leverhulme. On viewing the completed work, the celebrated soap-boiler expressed his opinion that neither the eyes nor the mouth nor yet the nose were his; proffering my palette I invited his lordship to make the necessary corrections himself. To me the portrait seemed to breathe with life and self-satisfaction and only lacked speech. To my relief the suggestion was declined. Anyhow the picture was despatched with all its faults and paid for. The next thing I heard was that it had been returned to my agent minus the head! The canvas was still fixed within the packing-case from which it had clearly never been removed.

I wrote at once demanding an explanation of this extraordinary occurrence to which I promised to give full publicity. Upon this I received a remarkable letter in which the great 'art-patron' asserted that 'on finding the picture to be too large to enter his safe' he had cut out 'the most important part, the head', and

placed it in that repository. As for the remainder, it had, he said, been sent back by 'error on the part of his housekeeper'. The letter ended with an urgent request to keep the matter dark and an invitation to dinner at Hampstead. My answer was to inform the Press of the story, which was duly published with photographs of the picture 'before and after' treatment.

Telegrams and messages now began to arrive from artistic bodies and students all over the world, including if not China and Peru, certainly Japan and the U.S.A. All expressed the utmost indignation at the act of vandalism which had been perpetrated and profound sympathy with the injured artist. Public demonstrations also took place. The students of the London Art Schools joined in organizing a procession to Hyde Park, where the offending millionaire was held up to execration and ridicule.

In Italy they went further. A twenty-four hour strike was called in that country, involving everyone connected with painting, including even models, colourmen and frame-makers. A colossal effigy entitled '*Il Le-ver-hul-me*' was constructed of soap and tallow, which, after being paraded through the streets of Florence, was borne to the Piazza dei Signori and there burnt on the very spot where Savonarola had suffered a similar fate some three hundred years before; the multitude of demonstrators then re-forming, proceeded to the Battisteria where a wreath of laurels was solemnly laid on the altar of St. John. . . .

I still have the decapitated torso which has not been claimed by its present owner, and I suppose the missing head still blushes unseen, condemned to waste its alkaline fragrance in the inviolable security of its steel sarcophagus.

* * *

A visit to Deauville at the suggestion of Frederick Guest yielded but a fragmentary harvest. The idea was that I should paint Mr. Lloyd George, whose henchman my friend had constituted himself. The Welsh wizard was staying in the district at the time, and I did begin a canvas; but my sitter, altering his plans, suddenly left for England. The next sitting I had took place at No. 10 Downing Street, but this portrait never passed its early stages. However, at another time I produced a more elaborate though still incomplete presentment of the statesman, which hangs in the Aberdeen Art Gallery.

I got some other people to sit for me, including Miss Paula Gellibrand and Miss Baba D'Erlanger, who posed together. Lady Michelham (No. 1) also sat. Contemplating the result rather ruefully she remarked that I needn't have dragged her out so obviously from the Ghetto. The fact is I hadn't consciously considered her origins. The genial Baroness D'Erlanger took me one evening to the theatre, where seated in the gallery, she gave me a useful demonstration in the art of drawing interior scenes. I have never sufficiently profited by this lesson in spite of the fact that it exemplified a technical tradition perpetuated in the atelier of Sickert himself.

Deauville was not to my taste. I took no interest in 'Chemin de Fer' or 'Banco', avoided the Sports and found the 'Potinière' intolerable. The sea and sand, pullulating with the *beau monde*, looked as cheap as a poster. It is true the 'Villa Black and White' where Catherine d'Erlanger dispensed hospitality, afforded some relief from the pervading desolation, but even this was only a mild *Paradis artificiel* and in the long run brought its own retribution.

One chance contact was memorable. I was at the Hôtel de la Normandie when a carload of visitors arrived. Among them I distinguished General Allenby, fresh from his triumphs in Palestine. Here was a Man. Somehow or other we got into conversation and later I obtained through his sympathetic A.D.C. a promise of sittings. The General was *en passage*, and after lunch pursued his journey, leaving me in hopes of fruitful developments in London. As the great soldier was making his exit, he noticed a remarkably insignificant little waiter shrinking in a corner. Turning aside he strode up to this poor devil, shook him warmly by the hand and bidding him good-bye, resumed his journey.

Another military hero, General Shea, added to his laurels one evening. Always well ahead of his troops, Shea had been the first to enter Jerusalem at its fall. We were lounging in the ballroom of the hotel. Somebody dared the General to dance. He had never attempted this exercise. After a few minutes of close attention to the movements of the gyrating couples, and having found an accommodating partner, he boldly took the floor and in his field-boots, successfully, if not gracefully, accomplished the tour of the ballroom.

Upon the election of my old friend Chaloner Dowdall as Lord Mayor of Liverpool, I was commissioned to paint a ceremonial

portrait of him. This portrait, which was presented to Dowdall by the municipality, having later changed hands several times, now hangs in the Melbourne Art Gallery. I stayed with the Dowdalls during the execution of the work which was carried out at the Town Hall. The Lord Mayor and I were conveyed thither each morning in the official carriage and pair—a stately as well as a convenient mode of transport.

My subject having donned his cocked hat, furred robe, chain of office, knee-breeches and buckled shows, stood grasping his wand. I added the figure of his sword-bearer, Smith, in attendance on his master. After the sittings I always looked forward to devoting the rest of the day to exploring new aspects of the city's life or revisiting old ones, for I felt in no mood to hurry back to the unfruitful respectability of the suburb where my host resided and found little difficulty in withstanding the pressure he brought to bear on me to return as we had come, in state. For one thing I had long since discovered the advisability of losing sight of one's sitters' features for a while; one was, I found, able to face them after a break with fresh surprise and courage; secondly, I had had enough of stateliness for the time being and, as I have hinted above, envisaged other forms of entertainment than were realizable in the vicinity of Sefton Park. Not that I was averse from the company of the Lady Mayoress, for the *Răni*, as John Sampson had entitled her, was the most charming and entertaining character in Liverpool, but her husband's presence, which his new status had reinforced with a solemnity and weight befitting the platform rather than the fireside, would, I felt, have been out of key with the mood of lightness and ease which, it seemed to me, the day's efforts had justified. Lord Mayors, I decided, when at home, should shed their responsibilities along with their insignia.

But Dowdall's desire for my company was due, I began to suspect, less to my personal attractions than to his anxiety to keep an eye on me, for as I was informed later, he had been warned by the police that my unconventional and perhaps imprudent frequentations, if made the subject of gossip, might in some mysterious way be held as prejudicial to the dignity of his Office. On learning this my attendance at dinner became still rarer, the hour of my return more incalculable. The knowledge that I was being kept under observation only resulted in my going still farther afield and the hint of danger merely whetted my

curiosity. The device upon my banner, if I ever carry one, will hardly be interpreted as 'Safety First'.

Profiting by a day or two's break in my professional activities I decided to visit Dr. John Sampson, who at this time was residing near a village called Bettws-gwerfil-goch in North Wales. It was late when I arrived at Cae-gwyn after a mile or two's ascent from the Holyhead Road.

I found the Rai laid up in bed with lumbago. Although in good health I was invited to share the remedy the invalid had prescribed for himself. The whisky was good and so was the learned Doctor's conversation. Beside the Sampson family there were also present Miss Dora Yates, an accomplished gipsy scholar and another attractive young lady known as 'Kish', of undefined status. Soon after the retirement of the ladies I bade Sampson good-night and followed their example. A room had been allotted to me, but by an oversight I had not been instructed in the lay of the house, which really consisted of twin houses joined into one. This made it rather confusing to a stranger, and it wasn't surprising when later a brief excursion being necessary, I should find myself in difficulties, particularly as the house was in darkness and I unprovided with any means of illumination. Astray somewhere in the lower levels of the building and depending entirely on the sense of touch, I groped my way. With extreme caution I opened several doors only to retreat before faint but unmistakable signs of human occupancy.

At last I struck a flight of stairs, resembling those I had before descended, and mounting them found at last what seemed to be the goal of my wanderings. I threw myself into a capacious bed. Hardly had I done so, being already half adream, when a terrible outcry arose. This unearthly and sustained ululation must, I feared, have been audible in distant Bala. But its source seemed to be appallingly near! Starting up, I now perceived by the dim luminosity of an uncurtained window the blunted outlines of two forms beside me! In an urgent whisper I adjured the unknown vocalist to control herself; for I had judged the voice, if human, to be that of a female. I then hastily decamped, only to be confronted in the passage with two figures in night attire, bearing a candle. These were the lady guests I have mentioned already. Alarmed by the disturbance, they had bravely ventured forth in case of need. Saluting them formally I now, by their light, was

able to find my bearings and reached my room without further misadventure. Next morning, alone at breakfast, for I seemed to be the latest down, my thoughts divided themselves between the bacon and eggs and the dream-like happenings of the night, when a young person entered and addressing herself to me, very firmly requested an explanation of my intrusion on her and Miss Honor's privacy. (This, then, was she whose clamour I had almost ascribed to some supernatural agency!) At once I provided her with a short summary of the foregoing. The governess, for such was her condition, pondered over this for a few moments, then, eyeing me narrowly said she would 'overlook the matter this time but hoped it wouldn't occur again'! I had no difficulty in reassuring her on this point, for I shared her hopes to the full. Thereupon she left me. After all, I reflected, it might have been worse: suppose I had blundered into the arms of John Sampson! I now found myself met at every turn with gloomy and disapproving looks. The little girl, Honor, alone greeted me with friendly mirth. But the general atmosphere was distinctly unsympathetic, and soon without word or ceremony I took my leave.

I had the day before me and with every step down the hillside my spirits rose. The sun shone. The sky was blue. To the south Aran Mawddy reared its majestic bulk above subsidiary hills like a patriarch supported on the shoulders of his acolytes. The village wore a welcoming aspect and I entered the lesser of its two inns and called for some beer. This inn had been overlooked by the Spirit of Age. It was untouched by modern refinement. The unnecessary fire burnt sacramentally in a kind of shrine, unembellished by cast-iron ornament or sham tiles. Above it rose no mirrored 'overmantel' cluttered with Manchester bric-à-brac. The whitewashed walls were unenlivened by commercial witticisms in pokerwork. No art-linoleum masked the naked flagstones. In fact it made no pretensions to luxury, and I found it greatly to my taste. A brisk and prepossessing young woman attended to me without showing any signs of suspicion; or if she had her doubts, politely gave me the benefit of them. 'What is your name?' I inquired. 'Blodwen, Sir,' she replied.

Soon I was improving my knowledge of Welsh under Blodwen's tutelage when the door opened, and in strode John Sampson. This put me out for I was making good progress in what should have been my native language. The Rai announced

rather pompously that upon reflection he was unwilling to allow my behaviour at Cae-gwyn to interrupt our friendship and was prepared to overlook it. At once I answered that I had no apologies to offer, and thanked him for nothing. Upon this, with an inward struggle, he assumed a more genial air and ordered some drinks. His thirst had evidently got the better of his scruples.

Our relations thus happily restored we moved after a while to the other inn, 'The Hand', where we fell in with a number of the 'Kálé' or descendants of Abram Wood. Soon the place resounded with the melodious crepitation of the Romani language, preserved in a dialect of exquisite intricacy by this vanishing tribe. Each speaker vied with the other in grammatical and idiomatic nicety and solecisms were greeted with derision. The symposium was only marred by the truculent attitude of one of the men, Howel by name. His behaviour finally provoked me to action. I took it upon myself to eject him, and after a short conflict he was landed prostrate in the road with myself firmly astride his shoulders. Dismounting, I left him to be led away by his brothers, bleeding profusely. Though somewhat bruised myself I seemed to have had, on the whole, the better of the encounter.

It was now time for me to set out on my return journey. Early next morning I was back in Liverpool. A necessary rest under a laurel-bush in Sefton Park fitted me to make my appearance at breakfast and soon afterwards I was again at work on the portrait.

I have already mentioned the outcry which this work gave rise to on being publicly exhibited, and the loyal stand made in these circumstances by its subject, Chaloner (now Judge) Dowdall, once Lord Mayor of Liverpool. He even supplemented my modest honorarium by a generous contribution from his own pocket.

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Asked to act as English representative on the Hanging Committee of the International Art Exhibition, Pittsburgh, U.S.A., after much cogitation I consented to do this. It gave me an opportunity to visit the U.S.A. free of travelling expenses with the option of doing some portrait painting at the same time. And so I found myself one fine day aboard the liner *Aquitania*, moving majestically out of Southampton Water. The *Aquitania* was a fine vessel with, I noticed, a greater profusion of those white trumpet-like objects on the top-deck than other liners I had seen. The

interior, decorated in the heavy 'baronial' style of a luxurious Victorian pub, dissimulated with complete success the imminence of the ocean. Yet here I felt at first rather like a lost soul (as is the case whenever I enter a smart hotel; but this was worse for there was no means of getting out). I had as travelling companion Monsieur Desvallières, a distinguished French artist on the same errand as myself. As he was usually immersed in religious exercises we seldom met except at meals, when he never failed to comport himself with the charming urbanity of which French gentlemen, above all, possess the secret.

This, my first voyage across the Atlantic (I was destined, like Columbus, to make three), was rather stormy but not disagreeable. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his family. The famous author was also bound for the States, where he had contracted to deliver a series of lectures dealing with the after-life. This subject now occupied his mind entirely: Lady Doyle, whom Sir Arthur described as a 'born automatic-writer', sat at his side regarding with good-humoured indulgence the two boys who never ceased their larking about the decks. Their father told me that if the ship should happen to go down, the boys would consider it but as a thrilling adventure, for they had no conception of death in the usual sense.

I joined in none of the deck games which the other passengers settled down to from the start. It would have needed a wider ocean than the Atlantic to wear down my native indolence and reserve. For me the wild background of the sea, the racing pattern of foam alongside, the veering gleam of flying-fish, a passing ship or the distant blowing of a whale made a fitting background and accompaniment to my solitary musings on deck. I reserved my latent social inclinations for after-dinner development. It appeared to me that the immigrants on the lower deck looked much more interesting than us first-classers.

At last, just as I was beginning to feel at home, the voyage came to an end and we found ourselves in New York harbour. I had missed the Statue of Liberty but hadn't I seen enough of the Lion de Belfort? Before berthing at the dock-side, the ship was boarded by a horde of pressmen. Pinning me down, they sought to get a 'story' out of me. I stood them a drink instead. I was naturally elated. Here I was at last in the New World, the land of my day-dreams as a boy; but as usual I was a bit late on the scene

which had undergone remarkable changes since the pioneering days to which my reading had accustomed me. The prairies had been ploughed; the backwoods levelled; the Indians mostly tamed or exterminated; the frontiersmen replaced by 'regular fellows'.

Faithful Homer St. Gaudens of the Carnegie Institute met us on the wharf. I was conducted to the Plaza Hotel. Outside a few imported hansom-cabs awaited the patronage of fastidious amateurs, avid for old sensations. Beyond stretched the dim pleasaunces of Central Park. I was taken that evening by gentle Mr. Frank Crowningshield to see what New York could do in the way of theatrical entertainment and deposited later at the hotel, exhausted and bewildered by an orgy of colour, noise, smartness and multitudinous legs. Next day we entrained for Pittsburg. Our way took us by the noble reaches of the Susquehanna. Afar in the amber air rose a faint pillar of smoke. Would this, I speculated, be a camp-fire of the Osages or, maybe, signalize the propinquity of less friendly Sioux . . . ?

A few days in the great industrial city sufficed for our work at the Gallery. Two American colleagues, George Bellows and Eugene Speicher, seemed a little on their guard as though suspecting Desvallières and me of questionable impulses. They were determined at any rate not to be imposed upon by a couple of Europeans, whose behaviour, however, was invariably correct and friendly. Desvallières, who spoke no English, found some difficulty in making himself understood, or more accurately, held forth at length without seeming to care in the least whether he were understood or not. One morning I delicately hinted that his eloquence of the evening before had been largely wasted. '*Je parlais pour moi-même,*' he replied shortly. This good man, his official duties done, would disappear to some religious establishment he had discovered, only returning in time to assume the *habit* for an evening's social ritual—he was elegance itself!

Impossible to describe the infernal splendour of the steelworks by night or the boundless hospitality of the Pittsburgians! The Carnegie Institute contains a fine permanent collection of pictures and sculpture. The sculpture gallery is noteworthy for a comprehensive display of casts from the Antique, only incomplete in the case of the male personages through the absence of certain characteristic features, amputated at the behest of

Mr. Carnegie himself. One place of interest in the neighbourhood which St. Gaudens took us to see was indeed memorable. It was an early Quaker (or perhaps Moravian) settlement. The carefully preserved buildings, of an exquisite simplicity, seemed still to breathe a language of archaic gravity and innocence.

Back in New York, a friend I had made in England and whose portrait I had painted, Mr. 'Toughy' Pine, an esteemed addict of Mrs. Rosa Lewis and the Cavendish Hotel now appeared, bearing a capacious bag filled with an assortment of counter-irritants with which to combat the plague of Prohibition then raging in the States. Next he took me to meet Mr. Robert Chandler, celebrated 'character' and painter of screens who kept open house somewhere in the neighbourhood of 10th Street: open that is to all who could repay his hospitality with some measure of entertainment, personal charm or originality. The virtues of continence and sobriety were apparently not insisted on here, but bores or 'stiff-shirts' were barred or soon found themselves in the street. On the ground of being an artist, I suppose, I was made welcome by Bob, and we became good friends. I found the easy atmosphere of his reasonably-sized and well-seasoned house a valuable resource amidst the alarming top-heaviness of a city where the buildings seemed to be straining in a continual effort to over-reach each other, and their inhabitants, for the most part, to be engaged in a similar trial of elasticity. 'Toughy' Pine, his obligations thus discharged, now departed whence he came, wherever that was and I saw him no more. Bob Chandler was a great big-hearted baby who, when provoked, expressed himself in inarticulate bellowsings while flapping his arms distractedly. This technique was calculated to subdue the obstreperous guest and at the same time mask his own timidity. He kept a Russian familiar or amanuensis on the premises who called himself 'Narodny', ministered to his master's vanity and enjoyed to the full the freedom of the cellar. This expatriate exemplified the 'Russian Soul', was given to mysticism, wore his heart on his sleeve, and at given moments would rush after me in an uncontrollable access of affection and imprint a resounding continental kiss on my reluctant cheek.

It was at Chandler's that I met that typical New Yorker, Ruth Draper, 'the white negress' as Bob called her in allusion to her peculiar style of beauty and perhaps her natural gaiety and charm.

Among the *habitués* was Carlotta, a handsome Columbian giantess whom I painted as large or even a little larger than life, till in a fatal mood of depression I reduced her dimensions to normal limits and ruined a promising picture.

Artists should beware of such fits of cold belittlement. Art happens like an imperious ejaculation of the spirit and explodes disconcertingly like certain plants in pod. Second thoughts are dangerous or even first ones unless they be made to serve as the faithful train-bearers of emotion.

At Bob Chandler's round table appeared one evening a curious, hairy and dilapidated figure in the shape of a tramp philosopher. Evidently an old customer, he took his place amidst the company with complete assurance and obvious appetite and thirst. With the satisfaction of his stomachic needs, the ideological professions of this 'hobo' became correspondingly loud, confident and denunciatory. Taking advantage of a pause. I asked him point-blank what he thought of our Banking System. But this inquiry only excited uneasy laughter and the peripatetic, at this moment, seemed to part with all his aplomb. Relapsing into silence he presently got up and vanished. Could this action be explained by his dinner or the Call of the Open Road? Or both? Had I been tactless, I asked myself? But I had only referred to an institution, recognized universally as the very bed-rock upon which is balanced the crazy edifice which under the name of 'Civilization' had been the object of our open-air friend's strictures. I began to suspect that in American society as in our own, the topic of finance like the question of the existence of God, as it only provokes discomfort, is impermissible. What is possible, though I can hardly believe it, even if America is the land of surprises, is that our loquacious 'Bum' was himself nothing but a banker in disguise, a kind of 'Professor Skinner', who alarmed by my inquiry, would elude detection . . . !

Among the portraits I completed during this visit to the States was that of Mr. J. Phipps. This I considered (on the second attempt) to be a success, though I understand the family are not of my opinion. This made no difference to Mr. Phipps himself, who was the soul of politeness. Through his good offices, I was introduced to the glories of Long Island, visiting his own and other great houses, including that of Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, an acquaintance of the *Aquitania*.

Perhaps the most sympathetic, because the most 'homely', of these residences was that belonging to Mrs. Pat Romsey. I became very friendly with this charming and vivacious personage and with several of her circle, foremost among whom was Mr. Tommy Hitchcock, the famous polo player.

I was happily discovered in New York by the New Zealand actress and old friend, Eve Balfour, now married to an English actor named Howlett. This generous and optimistic soul often hinted at the possession of occult powers and talked perhaps over-much of her 'vibrations'. Personally I couldn't see how her unusual physical advantages could be improved by the addition of supernatural elements which, when one wasn't 'psychic' oneself, could neither be seen or felt. If Eve Balfour chose to look mysterious, well and good; that phenomenon might at any rate be registered on canvas . . . One evening, however, we were together at the play. The lights went out and in the complete darkness my companion drew my attention to her hands. The fingers were luminiferous; they streamed with light . . .

My meeting with Miss Belle Green, the accomplished curator of the Pierpont Morgan Library, was providential. Showing me one day a little medieval panel, her latest acquisition, I at once exclaimed 'École d'Avignon!' Miss Green looked at me with astonishment, hardly able to believe that a mere artist and an English one at that, could display so much perspicacity. Her approval formed the basis of a valuable friendship.

Lunching at the Regency Hotel, which was Stevenson Scott's habit, we were frequently joined by Joseph Duveen. Taking me over to his shop opposite, the great merchant would dilate loudly for my benefit on the merits of Romney, Reynolds and Gainsborough, of which masters he always had several examples to get rid of. But my friend Stevenson Scott of Scott & Fowles, not content with selling pictures, actually bought some of mine for his private collection . . .

I spent some time at Buffalo on a portrait of an elderly lady called Mrs. Goodyear. The progress of this work was interrupted by an accident to my sitter who broke her ankle while I was out with her. I shall never forget her admirable behaviour when immobilized on the pavement, she never ceased to crack jokes while enduring what must have been the most excruciating pain. Truly a fine type of the old American school! The chief sight

at or near Buffalo is of course Niagara Falls, and I visited them frequently, crossing once into Canadian territory for a short motor-run with my friend, Mr. Conger Goodyear. More impressive to me even than the Falls was the spectacle of British policemen on duty as we crossed the bridge.

A few more portraits in New York, some successful—some otherwise—and I was ready to return. But I had established a foothold in New York, had made good friends and learnt my way about pretty well. It wasn't long before I was back among the electrified Ziggurats of the western Babylon.

When in 1912 I was elected Associate of the Royal Academy it came as a surprise and indeed a shock to my artistic world. To many it seemed to be not a triumph but a surrender. Had I not been a Slade student? Was I not a member of the New English Art Club? Did I not march in the front ranks of the insurgents? The answer to these questions is 'Yes'. But had I cultivated the Royal Academy in anyway? Had I ever submitted a single work to the Selection Committee? Had I, by a policy of appeasement wormed my way into the good graces of the Academicians, not, at that time I believe, indifferent to the persuasive properties of a case of good liquor, judiciously addressed? History answers 'No'. Without even blowing my own trumpet, the walls of Jericho had fallen! (to be re-erected of course: they are built only of lath and plaster after all). Some would say I should have displayed the austere intransigence of Steer & Nicholson and remained proudly aloof in the narrow and exotic confines of the Egyptian Hall opposite. But to me the situation called for a larger view, a wider strategy, perhaps a greater modesty . . .

The unprecedented gesture of the R.A. elicited from me its proper response. I acknowledged and returned the compliment. When in due course, I was elevated to full membership I could feel nothing but satisfaction mixed with diffidence, at finding myself in the company of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Hogarth, Turner, Wilson, Constable and other masters of the glorious English school. A colleague remarked at the time that I had achieved the crown of my career. I do not think so, since I have not yet merited it, but the walls of Burlington House are capacious and now always accessible. . . .



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